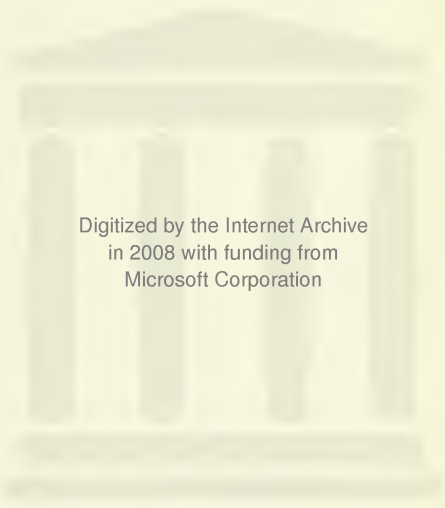


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PREMIUM TREATISE, No. II.

Selected by the Committee as entitled to the Second Premium.

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OUR COUNTRY:

ITS DANGER AND DUTY.

BY

REV. ANDREW A. LIPSCOMB,

OF MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA.

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“Has Popery renounced so much as one of its observances, of its doctrines, or of its claims? The religion, which was insupportable in other ages, will it be less so in ours?”—*Preface to D'AUBIGNE's History of the Reformation.*

NEW-YORK :

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1844.

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Designated, having been appointed for that purpose, have examined the Essays which have been submitted for their inspection, upon the theme proposed by the American Protestant Society. Twelve Essays have been submitted, four of which possess great merit. They have unanimously awarded the premium to the paper marked No. V., and which is entitled by the author, "ROMANISM INCOMPATIBLE WITH REPUBLICAN INSTITUTIONS."

GARDINER SPRING,  
THOMAS DE WITT,  
THOMAS E. BOND,

*Committee.*

The Essay entitled "OUR COUNTRY: ITS DANGER AND DUTY," is considered by the above Committee to be entitled to the Second Premium.

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## INTRODUCTION.

THIS Treatise, in the judgment of the Committee selected by the American Protestant Society to award the premium of \$100 for the best written treatise, showing the nature and influence of Romanism on our institutions, is next, in point of merit, to the one that received the premium. The Rev. Andrew A. Lipscomb, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, is the author. This work will, doubtless, be read by large classes of the community with great interest. The subject itself commands attention at the present time.

The time was when Romanism was viewed with indifference in this country—when its features were seen only on the dark page of history, or in the distance of some transatlantic country, or in the far South. But that

time has passed in the United States. The presence of 2,000,000 of Romanists on our shores, and the recent development of the designs of the Vatican in connexion with some of the monarchs of Europe, have begun to open the eyes of American citizens on things they had not expected to see in this country. In view of all the movements, both at home and abroad, it is timely to inquire, why are such numbers of men and such vast sums of money pouring in upon us from the old world.

That large class of our people who desire facts on the subject of Romanism, will be interested in the statistics in this treatise, showing the progress and the present state of popery in the United States. The lucid manner in which the subject is discussed, the excellent spirit pervading the whole work, and its paramount importance in the present critical state of our country, may well commend it to the American people.

Those who have thought that Romanism could make no progress among us—who have supposed that the intelligence of our citizens and the nature of our government have said, “thus far hast thou come, but no farther shalt thou go”—should solemnly ponder the causes and influences that favor its growth, and which, uncontrolled, may yet roll the car of despotism over this fair land.

The attention of every patriot and of every Christian is particularly invited to the manner and the means by which we are to meet and to resist this rising and threatening influence. This is vitally important at the present crisis. The time has come when the entire Protestant community should not only be roused from all past slumbers, but when the life, and faith, and love of the church should be put in requisition for the instruction and salvation of those ignorant and deluded men, who, by imposing forms and terrors, are driven far from the blood of the cross—men who, under the

power and guidance of designing teachers, may jeopard our liberties, while they peril the immortal interest of their own souls.

Should this brief notice be the occasion of deeper interest in the mind of the reader—should it awaken thought and feeling, while it quickens the pulse of Christian efforts in this great cause, the desire of the writer will be accomplished.

HERMAN NORTON,

Cor. Sec. of Am. Prot. Soc

NEW-YORK, Oct. 12th, 1844.

# OUR COUNTRY:

## ITS DANGER AND DUTY.

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### CHAPTER I.

CERTAIN PRINCIPLES ASSERTED AND ILLUSTRATED.

THE history of the world, prior to the introduction and establishment of Christianity, was almost one continued illustration of the great perversion and abuse of which religious sentiments are capable. If antiquity exhibited the deplorable effects of superstition; if its splendid genius, ardent ambition, and intense affections were often oppressed and withered by fanaticism, if its beauty and glory were so soon destroyed, the chief cause was found in the spiritual errors to which it pertinaciously clung. Providence made provision for its enlightenment. The symbols of the material universe addressed it. The essential principles of Patriarchal truth were not denied it. The influence of the Holy Ghost was not refused it. If a full and explicit relation was

not afforded, sufficient light was communicated to enable the world, so far as it was under the dispensation of the Gentiles, to trace the path to the throne and presence of God. The limited character of its revelations should have induced Heathen antiquity to cherish and improve them, for in proportion to the smallness of our resources in any thing, is the necessity increased to employ them to the best advantage. Unmindful of its sacred duty, the ancient Gentile world extinguished the last lingering lustre of a brighter period, and involved itself in the grossest darkness. The activity of the religious sentiments was then remarkable ; peculiar circumstances favored their development ; literature and government were recognized as in alliance with them ; the successes of war, and the peace of home, were felt to be associated with them. The tendencies of Atheism were not then known ; the temptations to Infidelity were not realized. Had the mind of Heathenism sought a right direction, shunned " vain imaginations," cultivated the simplicities of truth, and rested in the traditional wisdom of early ages, its altars might now be the resort of piety, as its temples are the resort of art.

Aware of the dangers, to which his blessed revelation was exposed, Jehovah selected the descendants of Abraham through Isaac to be the guardians of his truth. The doctrines

and institutions of Patriarchal times were enlarged, and the highest sanctions were connected with them. Separated from the rest of mankind—possessing a fine territory—favored with salutary laws—promised every blessing—the elect nation were to honor and defend the religion of Heaven. All this did not prevent corruption. Idolatry led them to disobedience. The arm of divine authority interposed, and punished the perjured people. A temporary repentance followed, but tradition arose, and again revelation sunk into neglect. Its principles were changed; its character altered.

If any one will examine the condition of the chosen nation at the advent of the Redeemer, and mark the subsequent reverses, he will discover, that a perverted religion was the primary source of all their misfortunes. It was this that caused the crucifixion of the Son of God. It was this that hurried them into all the excesses of party-passion, and led to their dreadful overthrow.

The introduction of Christianity formed a new era in the progress of religion. Its office was peculiarly spiritual—its commission universal. Its energies were omnipotent—its promises unbounded. So pure was it, that it displayed divinity only—so meek, that it sought chiefly the homage of the unknown—so radiant, that it illuminated even childhood—

so benevolent, that it pronounced benedictions on its foes—so diffusive, that it asked for no temple-home, and no hidden enthronement—so vast, that it gave exercise to all fears and hopes—so infinite, that it bore the majesty of Godhead. If we were arguing on abstract principles, we might conclude, that our gracious Lord would be pleased to put such a wise and holy system above the reach of corruption. Has this ever been his plan? Did he prevent the perversion of the older forms of religion? Whatever his intelligence saw was most fit, that he did to guard and support his truth, but human agency was not destroyed, and human perversity was not absolutely restrained. Moral means were used to induce men to love and preserve the knowledge of salvation, but physical instrumentalities were unemployed.

The nature and form of Christianity render it extremely liable to corruption. Is it spiritual? Has it mysteries? A field is thus opened for crafty men to pervert it. Is it without those national relations, that belonged to Judaism? Has it to traverse the world, seek out all men, and find a dwelling-place every where? It is thus made susceptible of constant abuse. Again, it is destitute of certain important checks, that were serviceable in guarding the Mosaic institute. The office of the Prophet under the old economy was main-

tained to check the priesthood—to prevent the unwarrantable exercise of their power, and hinder all innovation. If the nation departed from its covenant engagements and sacrificed truth to error, and affection to passion, Jehovah could send forth one of the heroic Prophets to seize the falling standard and raise it again on the hallowed summit of Zion. The call of a Prophet was synonymous with an appeal from Heaven to the nation, and his anointing was equivalent to a new unveiling of the beauty and charm of inspiration. No such order of men exist under the Christian dispensation. If the Christian ministry falters in its lofty designation and surrenders itself to unholy motives, no Isaiah, no Jeremiah, lifts up the voice of ancient eloquence and pledges the veracity of God for stern and terrible vengeance. Again, the theology of the Jewish nation was the growth of successive ages. It was more than ten hundred years from the announcement of the Law on Sinai to the utterance of the last Old Testament prophecy. The advantages of this consecutive manifestation of truth were numerous.

If the impressions of early revelations should be weakened—if announcements should be misunderstood—if obscurity should be pleaded as an extenuation of improper conduct—subsequent declarations of the divine will could readily and perfectly correct these things.

The particular circumstances of the community could be attentively regarded in each succeeding disclosure. Such an arrangement would be incompatible with Christianity. It was never designed to be a successive revelation, and consequently, was perfected at once by the Apostles. The great historical facts, on which Christianity rests—such as the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus Christ—never can be repeated, and hence, the doctrines growing out of them cannot be enlarged. One attestation of those facts is abundantly sufficient; one annunciation of the doctrines associated with them is amply calculated to awaken faith and love. Let these principles then be changed—let their position be reversed—let the essential and the secondary be confounded together—what will follow? No posterior revelation can be expected to correct errors and rectify mistakes. No new Apostle can arise and plead for the lost truth of his departed brethren. No interposition of Heaven, in the way of miracle, can be looked for by the suffering Church. The volume of Inspiration is now closed; closed against the additions of men; closed even against Divine additions, for God himself has nothing more to reveal to mankind.

Let it not be supposed, however, that our Heavenly Father has made no provision

against the corruption of his religion. Where such vital interests are at stake, where the honor of moral government and the destiny of immortal beings are involved, it would be unfair and unjust to imagine, that he has sent forth Christianity without any protection. If the animal system be injured, it has curative powers ; if the material world be desolated in any one of its landscapes, it will bloom again beneath the returning sunshine ; and shall God be less careful of the moral universe and the spiritual nature ? Though he has instituted no external and visible means to guard Christianity from the wiles of cunning men, yet, he has established moral instrumentalities to preserve it. The want of infallibility in the intellect is partially compensated by purity of motive and holiness of affection. The influence of the Holy Ghost is promised to guide us into all truth, and the erratic understanding is required to submit to the sway of purified feelings. Wise is the plan of God, that man should be chiefly indebted to his own heart, under the guidance of the Great Teacher, for his knowledge of religious doctrine. If the affections be sanctified, the mind may err, but not seriously ; experience will go far to correct speculation, and in the daily workings of his secret nature, the true disciple will find his best explanation of the mysteries of godliness.

So perfectly are the intellectual and moral blended together in the New Testament, that it is impossible for us to mistake the design of God. If we lack certain virtues, Inspiration declares, that *we are blind and cannot see afar off*, and our Redeemer taught, that the great cause of unbelief was the love of darkness. Express promises teach, *that if the eye be single, the whole body shall be full of light*. The student of church-history will often meet with forcible exemplifications of this fact. Tracing the progress of spiritual corruption in the dark ages, he will frequently see the experience of the heart triumphing over the errors of the understanding. Had the principles of the Papacy been fully realized in their inward operations, where would have been the devotional effusions of Kenpiss, Pascal, and Fenelon?

Another reflection may be presented.—There is a wide difference between those errors, which arise from wrong conceptions of the Christian doctrine, and those more dreadful corruptions, which spring from foreign sources. The fundamental points of revelation are so clearly and simply stated—so closely interwoven with biography and narrative—so elaborately unfolded in the didactic parts of the New Testament—so variously presented by different writers—that it is difficult to misunderstand them. Agreeably to

this fact, the great perversions of Christianity have been effected by the introduction of extraneous elements. The first thing that changed Christianity, was the association of the ancient philosophy with its doctrines. Deprived of miraculous aid in spreading the truth, and destitute of Apostolic authority and direction, how soon did the Fathers turn to Grecian poetry and eloquence for means of popularity and success ! The falling systems of Judaism and Heathenism were measurably incorporated with the divinely-originated and divinely-authenticated faith, and simplicity yielded to complexity. If men thus resign their own standard, and produce an unholy alliance between the works of God and man, there is no concealment of their iniquity—there is no extenuation of their wickedness—and charity itself is silent towards them.

The existence of such a volume as the Holy Scriptures—its wonderful preservation in original purity from age to age—its convincing attestations—its intimate connexion with the influence of the Holy Ghost as the Revealer of Revelation, has a most interesting and important bearing on this subject. Had the religion of Jesus Christ been intrusted to tradition—had it been committed solely and entirely to the Church and its ecclesiastical organizations, we cannot see how corruption could have been ascertained and op-

posed. Any and all enormities might have fastened on it—any and all demands might have been made by it—and the human mind, burdened and prostrated, would have had no refuge. Its incongruities with the character of the blessed God might have been imagined, but where would have been the appeal? Where the sure and strong sanction? Such circumstances existing, the zeal of holy ambition would have been extinguished, and the protestations of indignant eloquence hushed. Against these evils, Providence has kindly protected us. We have the Bible to consult; we have a sacred literature for our standard. If heresies prevail—if Antichrist claim our homage—we can resort to its illuminated pages. Here, we can *try the spirits of men*; here, we can *prove all things, and hold fast to the good*, the true, the everlasting; here, we can avail ourselves of the decisions of Omniscience, and clothe ourselves in the strength of Omnipotence. Had Luther been without the Bible, no Reformation could have been accomplished, so far as we can perceive, and the Papal Tyranny might have advanced, until the whole world had sunk beneath its baleful superstitions.

The relation that the Holy Scriptures sustain to the system of Christianity, exhibits to us the great and absolute importance of maintaining them, as the only and all-sufficient stand-

ard of revealed truth. If the purity and perpetuity of this blessed instrument of Divine Love be identified with the pages—if it be elevated as they are elevated—if it be secure as they are secure—no stronger reason could be assigned for the most vigilant watchfulness of their high claims. The sanctity of the Ark of the Covenant is transferred to them; the presence of the symbolic cherubim is with them. Any appeal to Tradition, as a source of Christian knowledge and foundation of Christian faith, must be made at the expense of Revelation. Let them be associated together and we have a new rule of belief and practice. The union of the Old and New Testaments was perfectly practicable; it was the union of kindred revelations: the same spirit was embodied in each of them; the same authority enforced them; but it can never be so with Revelation and Tradition. Water may combine with water, but who shall combine elements that have no affinity? The human mind will be compelled to vacillate between them, and the preponderance must eventually be on the side of Tradition. The mere acknowledgment of the right of Tradition to religious consideration cannot but enfeeble the power of Revelation over us; and if it be recollected, that we more readily sympathize with the character of man than with the attributes of God, we shall have no

difficulty in understanding how such a claimant can be honored with the primary homage of the heart. Nothing is more apparent, in the history of Christianity—nothing is more clearly evinced by the records of Judaism—than the utter impossibility of reconciling Religion and Tradition. They have never coalesced. The one must yield to the other. Our choice then is—not between Revelation as it is, and Revelation rendered more suitable to all intellectual and spiritual purposes by the addition of traditionary instruction—but between Revelation and no Revelation—between infallible Divinity and fallible Humanity—between light and darkness. It was this same evil that consumed the spirituality of the Jewish Church and opposed the claims of the Son of God ; its memorials marked the scenes of his life and death ; its assumptions were denied and reprobated by him ; and are we now to be urged to respect its pretensions and submit to its arbitrary decisions ? Is its agency in the crucifixion of our adorable Lord to be forgotten ? Is its shame and iniquity to be thus obliterated ?

The supposed right of ecclesiastical councils to impose their interpretations of Scripture on the consciences of men, is equally opposed to the supremacy of its authority. Nothing less than inspiration dwelling in such councils could warrant them in presenting such a de-

mand. The constant representation of Scripture is, that it forms the sole appeal and true resort of man, on religious subjects, but, the necessary effect of such church assumptions, is to make its opinions obligatory upon him, It is not with the Scripture then that we are brought in contact. It is not in the language of Prophets and Apostles, that we are to seek wisdom and peace. If inspiration has any office on this hypothesis, it is merely secondary; it is the office of a handmaid; it is the office of a waiter, who meets you at the door and conducts you into the apartments. Strange that so much pains should have been taken to produce the Bible; strange that we have any Scripture whatever! A Revelation from God, if deposited in such hands, and placed under such control, virtually ceases to be a revelation. It is not our property; it is not our guide. It belongs to a body of men, but not to mankind.

Had the Almighty declined to provide for our correct understanding of the sacred writings, there might be some show of reasonableness in these claims. Had he so constituted the Church as to give it the ascendancy over Christianity, the basis of these pretensions would be altogether different. The opposite of these sentiments is the fact. A full provision for the avoidance of vital error has been introduced and continued in the glo-

rious gift of the Holy Ghost. Destitute of its influence, the disclosures of the word would be nothing to us. The announcements of heaven might be there, clothed in the majesty of the throne, and graceful in their beauty, but they would be to us, as the roll of the thunder over the tenants of the tomb. The idea of the Spirit, *to lead us into all truth, to convince us of righteousness and judgment*, is inseparable from such a Revelation. So far as the ends of a divine standard are concerned, they would be unanswered, without such an attendant. If this be the portion of every sincere student of the blessed word, what more can councils claim? One of two things must be done. The force of those numerous passages of Scripture, which teach the doctrine of personal illumination, must be annulled—rejected—expunged—or, the Almighty must be accused of establishing two distinct and different means to effect the same end. Again, the design of the Redeemer in the constitution of his church, was, that it should be the instrument of Christianity. If the principles we combat be carried out, it will follow inevitably, that Christianity will be made subservient to the Church—that it will be degraded from its high position, and its entire agency altered.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE POSITION OF CHRISTIANITY IN OUR COUNTRY.

No one can read the Sacred Scriptures attentively, and not mark the difference between those revelations which refer to Christianity, and those which refer to Church organization. If we examine the former, we find the utmost clearness and fulness. The announcements of Christianity leave nothing unexpressed, so far as the essentials of salvation are concerned. Its connexions with the moral science of the Universe, its relations to the general plans of Providence, are not indeed ascertained to us, but, so far from this affecting its earthly interests, it tends to promote them, confining as it does our attention to the immediate wants of our spiritual nature, repressing curiosity, and expending its great energies upon that single point which gives it all its character. Our sun reveals the landscape below ; it shows nothing above. Acting on this mundane principle, Christianity spreads the most brilliant light over our condition, hopes, and destiny, adding argument to argument, and illustration to illustration, uttering its important sentiments through the lips of Jesus, and enlarging them in the instructions

of Apostles, enlisting Prophecy and History in its service, giving language to Types and Symbols, and even summoning Profane Philosophy and Poetry to the elucidation of its surpassing mysteries. There is a sense in which the doctrines of Christianity do not force themselves upon us. If we expect involuntary enlightenment from them, if we refuse to exercise our faculties and to seek divine aid, we shall unquestionably remain in darkness. Did the Almighty reward intellectual indolence, he would put contempt on his own gift of reason, and degrade Christianity. Though he has made no arrangement to illuminate the mind that puts forth no power of inquiry, yet he has provided for the instruction of those who anxiously labor to know his truth. There is a sense in which Christianity forces itself on our comprehension. If we seek, we shall find. If we come to the fountain, it will yield its waters. If we open our eyes, the light will assuredly shine. Agreeably to this sentiment, the essential principles of our holy religion have been understood, felt, and practised, under all kinds of opposing circumstances. Had Science and Art have been surrounded with the adversities that have gathered in the path of Christianity, they would have vanished from the earth; but amid all, its pure precepts and promises have shone into the humblest hearts and dis-

closed the glories of Eternity. A remarkable sameness has consequently pervaded the Christian community on the main elements of this system. The cardinal doctrines of the cross are as well established now in the different denominations of evangelical Christians, as their nature will permit, and heresy stands afar off, as clearly marked and known, as it is possible. It is not so with the constitution of the Church. We have here general principles only. Jesus Christ was almost silent, and Apostles confined themselves to a few statements on this subject.

The establishment of principles is one thing; the application of principles is another thing. One is independent of circumstances; the other is dependent on them. If the former has the divine sanction, that sanction will attend the latter, and honest men, in their use of them, will be guarded and governed thereby. The doctrines of Christianity occupy the same position and have the same office under all possible circumstances; they are founded in immutable moral relations; they deal with man as man. The institutions and polity of the Church cannot be so regarded. Visible and tangible as they are, they must be liable to those influences which affect all external forms. They must have reference to times and facts. They must connect themselves with the *citizen* as well as the

*man.* Our Lord has therefore given us general instruction on this point, and left it to human wisdom, guided by the Holy Ghost, to take that course which may appear to be most agreeable to his will and design.

The fundamental principles of ecclesiastical polity have been so modified and embodied by the various branches of the Christian Church in our country, as to suit, in a greater or less degree, the state of society. No such course has been pursued towards Christianity. The prevailing denominations have not felt at liberty to change its features or spirit, but with remarkable unanimity have surrendered their faith to Inspiration, and from its volume drawn their respective tenets.

If the different bodies of Christians in our country do disagree on minor points, they seldom fail to make a common appeal to the Scriptures, and thus manifest a perfect readiness to stand or fall by its decisions. The most animated controversies show a heart-felt reverence for the revealed word, and a disposition to take it as the sure rule of faith. This fact may well excite our gratitude. The infancy of national existence usually gives birth to all kinds of extravagance and folly, but we have been mercifully preserved from them, to a large degree, in our religious progress. Spiritual superstition has never darkened and distressed our people, as a general

thing, and we owe our deliverance from it to the appreciation of the written word as the ultimate authority. So let it be forever!

The position of Christianity in our country is one of peculiar character. A few considerations will probably illustrate this fact.

The history of the world demonstrates that Christianity has had almost invincible difficulties to overcome before it could incorporate itself with governmental institutions, based on principles foreign to its own revelations. To recur to no other example, the Roman Empire exemplifies this observation. Happily for us, Christianity was recognized in the very foundation of our freedom. It brought the Puritans to this continent—it presided over their plans and purposes—it directed their course—it hallowed their efforts. Where else shall we look for Christianity watching over the birth of Liberty, and pointing its opening vision to the distant throne of God? Where else shall we discover men combining the divine and the human together, displaying the calmness of Philosophers with the heroism of Warriors, and nerved with the energy of Enthusiasm, without its fictitious motives? If Christianity be entitled to the sway of any country, that country is ours, for it diffused the first light over its forests, and breathed the first promises of future blessing to its anxious founders. It is not this

fact, however, that renders its situation here so extraordinary. Its relation to our institutions is anomalous. The world has presented nothing exactly like it. If the forms of civil government among us be viewed as an experiment, it may also be said that the relation of Christianity is experimental. We are endeavoring to prove to the nations of the earth that man is capable of self-government, but is this all? Is this the only end of our toils and labors? Another design is also in view. We seek to show that Christianity is capable of self-support. If the former be important, how much more important the latter! If the one needed such a land as this for its exhibition and confirmation, how much more so the other!

The usual position of Christianity has been such as to expose it to serious invasion and injury from the state. It has generally been allied with worldly authority and subjected to worldly agency. The advocates for this union are compelled to resort to abstract reasoning for their justification, and they thereby acknowledge the total absence of a direct divine warrant for it. Nowhere does the New Testament address itself to Christian nations as such, and nowhere does it legislate for them. Nowhere does it contemplate such a combination. Its letter and spirit are both against it. The authority of the Old Testa-

ment can no more be pleaded for it, than it can be pleaded for circumcision as a rite or seal of the present dispensation. It rests on no moral principle, and cannot therefore be viewed as necessary. To make political relations the basis of moral and religious institutions, is to reverse the natural order of things, and confuse all our ideas of propriety. If God introduced this feature into the ancient economy, it grew naturally out of pre-existent facts; it was the result of his new and distinctive relation to the nation as its political head; but if modern nations claim a similar institution, they are surely bound to prove the establishment of a Theocracy. Nothing can be plainer, we think, in the New Testament, than that one great object of the introduction of our dispensation was to free religion from those national connexions and embarrassments, under which it so long labored. Every principle of Christianity that signalizes it as superior to Judaism, also signalizes it as incapable of those restraints that bound its predecessor.

Though the leaven of corruption had begun to work in the Christian system, prior to its secular association, yet, the truth cannot be disguised, that those corruptions would not have become so dreadful—nor wielded such tremendous power—nor defied all attempts at reformation—nor fastened themselves so

closely on the world and the Church, if it had not been for those associations.

Whenever Christianity is thus allied with the State, it will be identified with all the infirmities and passions of men ; it will be made eventually a party-instrument ; it will be enlisted in violent strife and struggle. Last of all, it will give a fearful advantage to its enemies. It will never be able to war a fair warfare with them. It will be held responsible for whatever is incidentally united with its institutions, and be compelled to bear the evils of bad policy, so far as it is connected with the State. The history of French Infidelity places this fact beyond a doubt.

American Christianity knows no such union. It desires it not. It abhors such an unwise and unholy league. It asks to be left alone. We consider this a vast achievement in its history. We consider it the commencement of a new spiritual era. We consider it as the foundation of its extensive influence and usefulness among us. If the religion of the Redeemer were associated with the government of our country, through the instrumentality of an established Church, it is easy to see, that in the warmth of party conflict and the struggle for the maintenance of party measures, its interests would be alarmingly jeopardated. The true course ever to be pursued by governments towards this system is to

acknowledge its moral influence, protect its disciples, and respect its Sabbath, but, at the same time, to keep its institutions and symbols removed from that turbulent arena, in which opposite views and passions are arrayed against each other. The independent attitude of Christianity in these confederated states is such, as to afford it the finest imaginable opportunity for the display of its divinity and the accomplishment of its moral wonders. Such an attitude fills the hearts of its advocates with the sentiments and feelings of responsibility. Nothing intervenes between them and that system with which their hopes and happiness are blended. Nothing appals their courage and arrests their exertions, but they may fearlessly pursue their plans of evangelization, and claim the homage of the country for their God. The two great evils of Church establishments—the pride of intolerance and the humiliation of dissent—are here unknown, and we have common motives to stimulate, common objects to effect, and common triumphs to enjoy.

Contemplating the interesting and solemn position of Christianity among us, we must realize the vast importance of sustaining its spirituality and permitting no intermixture of worldly wisdom with it. The power of Christianity lies in its moral purity. So far as it represents the Holy God—so far as it urges on hu-

man consciences the immutable laws of truth, justice and benevolence—so far as it humbles the vanity of man, and brings him to submit unreservedly to the sovereignty of the Redeemer—so far it is endowed with mighty energy. Its announcement of the Divine Love, operating through a medium that glorifies all the other perfections of the Godhead, is a wonderful source of spiritual influence. False doctrines have indeed exerted tremendous power over men. Superstition has made martyrs of thousands. Enthusiasm has wrought astonishing changes in society. Fanaticism has surpassed both, in the magnitude of its effects. Does this prove that error is more mighty than truth? Far from it. Did men resign themselves as freely to the sway of Christianity, as they have frequently done to the dominion of its antagonist principles, we should discover that the one has far greater power to improve and sanctify them, than the other systems have had to degrade and corrupt them. Can the superstitious sufferings of the devotees of the dark ages be compared with the heroism of the Apostolic era? Can the vaunted sacrifices of Simon Stylites, Peter the Hermit, and Ignatius Loyola, be placed beside the trials and tribulations of those whose dignity, fortitude, and piety, adorn the records of Christian martyrdom? The temporary excitements of fever impart fictitious strength to the

animal system, but it is the energy of robust health that gives man the partial control of nature.

Obvious therefore must be the fact, that a pure Christianity only can exert a salutary efficacy over our national mind and morals. The arm of secular authority may support this system under other and different governments, though it should be burdened with corruptions. The zeal of its ministry might depart, and the holiness of its membership decay and die, but still wealth would fill its treasury and patronage lavish its favors upon its institutions. It could not be so here. We have no alternative between Christianity independent and pure, and Christianity destitute of influence.

The intimate connexion subsisting between spiritual Christianity and judicious Church-organizations and operations ought not to be overlooked. To have trusted the economy of the Church, fraught as it is with all the elements of power, to fallible men, without strong checks, would not certainly have accorded with the usual plan of Providence. The outline of this polity is so meagre in the inspired volume, that we need some effective guard, in our efforts to embody its principles. That restraint is furnished in the nature and design of Christianity. If the Church was constituted for the sake of Christianity, can any thing be more reasonable than the supposition, that all

its institutions and arrangements are to accord with the spirit and laws of this heavenly science? Did nothing else indicate this truth, the fact that the New Testament constantly represents our personal Christianity as the qualification for Church fellowship, and enjoins the exemplification of its sentiments therein, would put it on the firmest foundation.

That circumstances may occur in the history of our country, which would offer temptations to our larger Churches, and afford them an opportunity of exerting their agency to accomplish political objects, is evidently within the bounds of possibility. The time may yet come—it may soon come—when the decisions of the ballot-box may be under their control. One of our popular denominations might grow until the balance of power would settle down in its hands. Are we to look to general principles and human reasonings for a safeguard against this evil? The pliability of the mind is too well known to encourage such a delusive hope. If such a tendency should ever be manifested, nothing but a careful cultivation of Christian sentiments can check it. The surest restraint on the abuse of ecclesiastical power is exhibited in the principles of our holy religion, and it may therefore be safely affirmed, that any body of professed Christians, who conscientiously and intelligently adhere to

the sentiments taught by their Founder, can never commit egregious errors in its exercise. Let a pure Christianity be maintained in our country, and the Churches will have no temptation to pervert their influence. Whatever talent may be found in them—whatever emulation and energy—will have its appropriate field of enterprise. The great and active power of a Church must display itself; it cannot be dormant; and hence, if it be not consecrated to the interests of the Cross, it will seek other ends.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### CONNEXION OF CHRISTIANITY WITH THE VITAL INTERESTS OF OUR COUNTRY.

THE writers of the New Testament were particularly careful to teach the world, that government was a divine institution. It was on this ground that submission to it was urged. Had the political relations of man been overlooked or disregarded by the inspired penmen, we should have been involved in serious difficulties; the course of duty would have been perplexing, and the welfare of Christianity would have been hazarded. The revelations of the New Testament on this subject, as well

as on all others of a kindred nature, protect the rights and privileges of mankind, enforcing the laws of our creation, confirming its charter, and condemning every infraction of it. If any man or community of men depart therefrom, Christianity withdraws all its sanctions from their actions, and warrants the most resolute hostility.

The institution of government having originated with God, it must be viewed as a most valuable means to accomplish the purposes of his providence, and accordingly we often find the most important divine plans executed by its agency. Receiving these premises, we cannot but conclude, that our Heavenly Father will employ his omnipotence, in some way, to support it. Shall we look to his interference, by miraculous media to effect this object? Nothing but enthusiasm would advocate such a sentiment. The operation of Christianity must be considered as the ordinary channel, through which the gracious providence of God will perform this work. Diffusing its celestial light among all intellects, and its celestial love among all hearts, it is perfectly fitted to defend every wise government against those evils, that threaten its harmony and endanger its existence. The foe of tyranny, it frowns on every effort to enslave the creatures of God; the patron of liberty, it gives its strong sanctions to every just attempt to achieve it.

The farther man progresses in civilization, and the greater his improvement in civil polity, the more need is there of the presence and purity of Christianity ; for every such advance is removing society from physical means of government, and resting it on moral influence. The sole source of moral power is Christianity, and consequently it alone furnishes the hope of enlightened communities. All forms of Atheism and Infidelity are as incompatible with the stability and happiness of the world, as we can imagine any thing to be ; they have no sympathies with virtue, and no care for the higher nature of man ; they have no appeal beyond their own false doctrines ; they have no restraints upon passion ; they are utterly powerless as respects vice. To resign Christianity then would be equivalent to a retrograde movement in all cultivated society, and a deliberate choice of the worst kind of barbarism. It would be a barbarism, corresponding in depth and depravity with the former exaltation and morality.

The inevitable effect of republican institutions is to develope the strength of communities, and to augment their means of influence. They will call forth all the talents and energies of their subjects. The friend of every man, they make every man their friend ; and by this reciprocal action, every latent principle and every mighty passion are aroused.

The policy of Carnot in the French Revolution opened the posts of honor in the army to the humblest soldier, and thereby changed the military aspect of all Europe. A government like ours interests and secures the vigorous spirit of all ; and consequently, if the same amount of liberty could be enjoyed under a monarchical institution, the people could not cherish the same attachment to it, separated as it would be from themselves. The excitement of intellect and passion, that grows out of our national polity, must have a superior moral force to direct it. Perilous would our situation be, if, amid the wonderful exertions and exercises of the spirit of American freedom, we had no safe guide. Public opinion is justly magnified by us. Salutary laws are properly eulogized by our countrymen. A liberty, founded on any thing but public opinion, and supported by any other means than wholesome laws, would be unworthy of possession. The union of opinion and law—each operating in its respective sphere—each aiding the other—is undoubtedly the hope of our land. But what shall give tone to opinion ?—what lead to the enactment of judicious laws ? What shall create them ? When difficulties arise, that human reason cannot explain, where shall we find an oracle ? To say, that public opinion and law, in themselves, will preserve our noble inheritance, is to utter

words that mean nothing. We must look for something higher than both, and rest in it. If this is the fact, the relation of Christianity to our freedom reveals itself, in the most impressive and imposing manner. Yield the control of opinion and law to it ; subordinate all purposes and plans to its judgment ; pursue its calm, wise dictates ; shun the evils that it warns us against, and all our patriotic hopes will be realized, and all our philanthropic aspirations fulfilled.

The real and inherent dignity of the law, it must be admitted, should be deeply and indelibly engraven on our national mind ; but what can lend that lustre to it, and make it august in all its connexions, but the moral influence of Christianity ? We recognize the Supreme Being in our court procedures, but is not that recognition equally necessary in all civil life ? Any motives that would prompt a community to surrender its religious convictions and plunge into speculative or practical infidelity, would inevitably impel it to sacrifice all sentiments of truth, justice, and benevolence, and plunge it into the horrors of lawlessness and crime. The converse is equally true.

Politicians lay peculiar stress on the education of the people. So do all of us. "*Knowledge is power*," say they. "*Knowledge is power*," say we. Is knowledge alone sufficient to make a good citizen ? The arguments of some persons would seem to imply it.

Is it a fact however? Examine it a moment. Does knowledge alone constitute a good husband, a good child, a good merchant? Is the mind the man? No one would reason so on other matters. The value of the intellect is in its subordination to the heart—the usefulness of knowledge, in its sanctification by pure affections. What then? If you enlighten the people, do not forget that this is but half the work. Let them be made virtuous and religious, or you leave them more exposed to danger than they were before. We hold, then, that in the same ratio in which you educate our community, in that same ratio Christian influence becomes absolutely necessary for them. Does any one doubt it? Tell him that the power of passion is far greater than the power of intellect; tell him that our hearts, not our understandings, govern us.

Again, the whole ground of moral action is not covered by opinion or law. A train of causes might overthrow the country, and yet be beyond the reach of both these influences. There are evils, that neither the one nor the other can assail and destroy—formidable and destructive evils. Here the resort to Christianity becomes essential: here its aid alone is available. It is this that exalts our divine religion above all the arts of mankind. The most effective civil instrumentalities may be employed to remove all those barriers to the

progress and perpetuity of freedom, that are within the legitimate sphere of government, but yet, after the last one has been destroyed, and political agency has gone to its utmost limit, the most dangerous foes to its institutions may be undermining the stately fabric. Corruption may be working ; luxury may be enervating ; domestic wickedness may be extending ; general looseness of principle and manners may be fast spreading ; and all the while the nation is paralyzed ; it can do nothing ; such things are beyond its authority. Amid such circumstances Christianity affords the only refuge. The dreadful evils may be out of the reach of law, and all other human means, but *it* can assail them. It can bring Infinity and Eternity to bear upon them. It can triumph over their destruction. Could we give tenfold power to law and opinion, could we enthrone patriotism in the depths of affection, could we convert the memory of the Puritan Fathers and Revolutionary Heroes into an element of our natures—should we then be authorized to resign Christianity, and forget the sovereignty of Jehovah ? No, never. The all-powerful sway of these sentiments would still be necessary. Without them, we should be at the mercy of contingencies—without them, we should have no guarantee that our posterity would be freemen. The enduring—the immortal—is inherent only in Christianity, and in that with which it combines.

Agreeably to these reflections, we find that where all ideas of God and all sentiments of religion have been temporarily discarded by a nation, it has been driven to recover them, as its final security against destruction. Let us take two scenes from the memorable French Revolution.

It is the year 1793. The magnificent city of Paris is one vast scene of commotion. Fanaticism has commenced its triumph. All thoughts and passions are merged in one absorbing thought and passion. All hopes and happiness seek one direction. All hearts centre in one object. The plea is philanthropy, but the purpose is lawlessness. The watchword of the tongue is liberty, but the ideal of the imagination is licentiousness. The blood of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette has stained the murderous axe, and the nation riots over their ruin. One act of impiety—one act of unparalleled depravity remains to be performed. It is done ! Hebert and others resolve “*to dethrone the King of Heaven as well as the monarchs of the earth.*” BISHOPS propose the horrible measure to the assembly. The sacred images are trampled under feet ; the Hallelujah is parodied ; the churches are robbed ; and Nôtre Dame becomes the Temple of Reason.

“*Mortals !*” exclaims Chaumette, “*cease to tremble before the powerless thunders of a*

*God, whom your fears have created."* The smoke of the bottomless pit spreads over the land, and the last ray of heavenly light is extinguished. The wickedness of the antediluvian world is transcended, and the unhappy nation, abandoned by virtue and forsaken by Heaven, takes a place in the calendar of iniquity, that Sodom and Gomorrah would have blushed to occupy.

"*God !*" says Monort, "*if you exist, avenge your injured name. I bid you defiance.*"

It is the year 1794. It is the same city. The interval has been immortalized by crime, and the world has learned, for the first time, the vast capacity of human nature for vice. The Reign of Terror has continued. Opposing factions have perished beneath the terrible arm of the Jacobins. The madness of the nation increases, and even the sentiment of self-preservation has departed from almost every breast. Is there no refuge? Is there no hope? Instincts have all failed; enthusiasm has failed; amusements have failed; Reason has failed; every thing has failed to stay the tremendous recklessness of the people, and restore stability to the fundamental principles of society.

Let the master-spirit of the Revolution now speak.

"The idea of a Supreme Being," says

Robespierre, “and of the immortality of the soul, is a continual call to justice ; it is therefore a social and republican principle. Who has authorized you to declare that the Deity does not exist ? Oh, you who would support in such impassioned strains so arid a doctrine, what advantage do you expect to derive from the principle that a blind fatality regulates the affairs of men, and that the soul is nothing but a breath of air impelled towards the tomb ? Will the idea of nonentity inspire man with more pure and elevated sentiments, than that of immortality ?”

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“The Encyclopedists, who introduced the frightful doctrine of Atheism, were ever in politics below the dignity of freedom ; in morality, they went as far beyond the dictates of reason. That sect propagated with infinite care the principles of materialism ; we owe to them that selfish philosophy, which reduced egotism to a system ; regarded human society as a game of chance, where success was the sole distinction between what was just and unjust ; probity as an affair of taste or good-breeding ; the world as the patrimony of the most dexterous of scoundrels.”

Can it be possible that these sentiments are now proclaimed ? Can it be possible, that Atheism has so soon dissappointed its advocates, and left them to find another resort ? The

splendors of genius have been associated with it—the most attractive forms of popular literature have embodied its principles. The fairest opportunity to redeem its promises has been offered—but yet its supporters have been driven to its renunciation, and forced to seek shelter under the broad wing of religion. The instructive pages of history teach no fact more impressively than the great moral of the French Revolution; a moral that enforces, more strongly than any thing else in the annals of our race, the truth that no nation can trifle with the authority of God and reject the solemn sanctions of eternal law.

Did the limits of this brief volume permit, we might try to show, that the influence of Christianity is the only influence which can moderate the strife of party and preserve our country from its ultra-excitements. The existence of political parties is not indeed an evil in itself, but the intemperate zeal and virulent animosities that have been generated thereby tend to dissever our bonds. Let us not forget that we are in as much danger from the abuse of lawful means, as from the use of those which are unlawful.

One reflection more may be worthy of consideration. The lower and laboring classes of our land, as they are called, will always exert a preponderating weight in the national affairs. Politicians are aware of this fact, and

hence eagerly court their favor. Apart from Christianity, where shall we discover suitable means to give them just moral views and feelings? How else can they be adorned with the graces of refinement, and exalted to the dignity of which they are capable? A peculiar characteristic of that system is its benevolent concern for the poor; it has always loved the humble cottage; it has ever shed its sweetest and serenest blessings on the path of those who knew not the fashions and follies of the world.

Our fathers—our greatest heroes—our most illustrious statesmen—have agreed in their opinions on this subject, and besought the nation to cultivate Christianity, as the conservative power of the Republic. They were too wise to entertain any other sentiment. Appreciating the advantages of freedom, and anxious to have it perpetuated, they turned to religion, for its effectual support. All observation, experience, and history, demonstrate the correctness of these views. If we fail to act upon them, we shall disregard the instinct of humanity, as well as the instructions of duty; the memory of our noble ancestors will be dishonored; and we shall present to the universe the singular spectacle, of a people owing national existence and prosperity to Christianity, and yet so lost to gratitude—so lost to every idea of self-preservation—as not to feel and acknowledge it.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE RELIGIOUS CHARACTERISTICS OF POPERY.

THE human mind has fallen into numerous errors on the subject of Christianity. If we were requested to specify a single principle that had never exercised the skill of disputants, we could hardly do it. We are not, however, to conclude that all errors of a religious nature are equally pernicious. Every poison is not alike fatal. There may be a departure from the exactness of Christianity—there may be an exaggeration of one truth and a depression of another, and yet the vitality and spirituality be preserved. Though the doctrines of revealed religion are all highly important, yet we do not feel warranted in declaring that they are all important in the same degree, and, consequently, that every species of error is necessarily destructive to spiritual experience. The power of truth has not been endangered by diffusing it, so to speak, over a large surface, but it has been embodied in a few prominent principles and facts, based on clear and convincing demonstration. Articles of doctrine are not necessarily articles of faith. If those fundamental points are sacrificed that stand in the very front of revelation, and are always

associated in the Scriptures with the realization of evangelical peace and purity, we must incapacitate ourselves for sympathy and communion with God ; for if the *means* of grace are resigned, how are the *ends* of grace to be obtained ? Removed from these essential features of Christian doctrine and faith, are other minor announcements, on which diversity of sentiment may arise without serious detriment to the system. To magnify every fact in revelation as of similar sacredness and dignity is unfriendly to the best interests of religion. It increases the difficulties of union. It embarrasses the anxious seeker of salvation. It mystifies faith. It thwarts its own object, for so far from giving efficiency to religious sentiments, it augments the probability of their rejection. Oneness of faith and diversity of opinion are certainly not incongruous. The aim of the Apostles was to allow all reasonable latitude to their disciples, in matters of a general nature, while they sedulously labored to bind all to the cardinal facts involved in the vicarious atonement of the Son of God. Kindred with all its other enormities, is the doctrine of the Church of Rome, that whatever it teaches must be embraced by the consciences of its members, under the penalty of anathemas.

We offer these remarks introductory to a view of Popery ; but before we proceed, an-

other observation may be presented. Protestants and Papists are certainly placed under circumstances to understand each other. The controversy has been continued for several centuries. The ablest champions on both sides have engaged in it. Had it been confined to one nation, it might have been modified and changed by national peculiarities; but instead of this it has been spread over the most prominent countries of the earth. Had it been limited to a solitary age, it might have assumed the characteristics of the times and been mingled with extraneous matters; but so far from this, it has perpetuated itself through successive generations, and awakened the talent of the noblest intellects for three hundred years.

Throughout that long period authorities have been constantly accumulating; sentiments have been freely interchanged between the adverse parties. We have, then, the whole field open before us. Our position is well known; our antagonists have taken their ground. It is no abstraction that we debate. It is no transcendental theory that we are examining. The superstitions of the Papacy, running through successive generations, combining with almost every form of society, developed and applied under all kinds of circumstances, cannot now be mistaken. Had we to combat the system as a system merely,

without an acquaintance with its legitimate fruits, we should be at no loss whatever to discern its fanatical nature—its inconsistency with divine revelation—and its incongruity with intelligent reason: but we have now a far firmer foundation on which to rest—the foundation of actual and literal history. Its religious and political effects have been accomplished. The records of the past, and the observation of the present, disclose its revolting characteristics.

Had the Papacy the strongest arguments to offer in its support, the weight of those arguments would be entirely destroyed, with all thoughtful and unbiassed minds, by the dreadful perversions of truth, honor, and piety, that have ever marked its manifestations. The most splendid reasonings, and the most profound proofs, would be nullified by the history of its deeds. How much more impressive are these facts, when we connect them with the reflection that the assumptions of the Papacy have not a solitary argument in their favor but what may be disproved!

The broad proposition, *that the principles held and taught by the Church of Rome are calculated to destroy all spiritual Christianity*, is susceptible of as clear proof, as any thing short of the exact sciences can be. Aware of the absolute importance of having a plausible basis for its claims, it, first of all, arro-

gates Catholicity and Infallibility. Various churches were founded in Jerusalem, Antioch, Damascus, and Judea, before the Gospel was ever known at Rome, and yet it is the Catholic Church! Starting into existence after those religious organizations—having no immediate connexion with the Redeemer—and yet assuming Catholicity! Rivalled by the Greek Church in many points—scarcely ever without dissenters in its own bosom—compelled to resort to the most violent and arbitrary measures to check opposition to its doctrines—prevailing over a portion of the world by prevailing over conscience and reason—and yet requiring homage on the score of Catholicity! It boasts of Infallibility, and yet it is not agreed where this wonderful infallibility resides. One party places it in the Pope; another party denies that, and lodges it in Councils. One decision of the Church is against another—as, for instance, the decision on Images in 754 and 787—and yet infallible! The doctrine of Transubstantiation, denied and opposed by the early Church, and yet in 1215 declared to be a part of the faith—contradictory views by the same Infallible Church! The plainest statements of the Scripture perverted—such as the apostolical sentiments on the marriage of ministers—and yet infallible! Without any shadow of proof for the doctrine, except the supposed

necessity for such infallibility and the figment of succession, it lifts this towering presumption and demands acquiescence in its changing decisions ! The claim of infallibility is one of such vast importance, and involves such great interests in it, that we may reasonably suppose our Heavenly Father would have given us the most satisfactory evidence of it. It is not a self-evident proposition, and we may therefore demand the proof of its correctness. Romanists refer us to the revealed word, to ascertain its grounds. If we cannot honestly find these claims substantiated there, are we to blame, or the word itself ? But with what consistency can they send us to the Bible, to 'see the proofs of infallibility, when they themselves declare, that we need an interpreter, *an infallible interpreter*, of its pages ? Against this doctrine are arrayed all those texts of Scripture which require the exercise of our minds, and which allude to sentimental differences of opinion as being consonant with true grace. Against it is to be put every passage, that speaks of the unity of love as the bond of churches, in contradistinction to the unity of judgment. Against it is the whole authority of revelation ; for if it be entitled to respect, we have no longer a divine standard. Against it are the historical facts of dissimilar views having been proclaimed by the Roman Church at different

times ; for if it possess infallibility, it can admit of no degrees ; it is a negative idea ; and must therefore be always the same—possessing perfect wisdom. And lastly, any process of argument that would demonstrate the soundness of this claim, would annul itself, for the same process would prove the infallibility of separate minds, and thus, we should have as many *infallibilities* as we have individual intellects. A world of matter has no characteristic that does not belong to each atom.

The value attached to tradition follows in the train of infallibility. Romanists are famed for the stress laid on it. A shadowy land, full of difficulties, marked by almost numberless paths, and divided into opposing territories, is to be carefully and slowly travelled over, to seek out its ancient residents. We wonder at this trouble. We wonder at this delusive regard for the past. If infallible, why need the Roman Church call the departed Fathers to its aid ? Why consult their pages ? It cannot err, on its own theory, but yet must authenticate its decision by old and musty tomes. The essential use of infallibility is destroyed, if it has to resort to these helps. The power claimed either resides in it, or does not ; if it does, the value of tradition is at once overthrown ; if it does not, we should be happy to know how it can be derived from these sources.

Agreeably to these unreasonable, unjust, and unholy assumptions, are the other distinctive doctrines of the Papacy. The vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ—that wonderful fact which makes Christianity a restorative system, and gives birth to all its other sentiments—is virtually set aside. Its simplicity lost—its adaptations to the human conscience and heart destroyed—its position in the glorious scheme of grace is entirely altered, and its solemn grandeur is to subserve unmeaning impressions on the senses. Justification by faith—the old Abrahamic doctrine—the new covenant's strength—is discarded, and we are taught by Romanism to look for inward purity and external works as the basis of eternal hope.

The doctrine about Mass falsifies the whole philosophy of Christianity, and places a most dangerous and dreadful power in the hands of the priests. Says the Christian's Guide, a Romanist work of authority, "*I profess likewise, that in the Mass there is offered to God, a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead.*" If we were to overlook the destructive *moral* effects of such an institution, its *intellectual* influence in diverting the attention from Jesus Christ, and fixing it on the vanities of man, would be sufficient to stamp it with entire unfitness for all religious purposes. Whenever professed religionists can thus obtrude their follies on their

fellow-men—can thus tamper with the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, and hide the Cross from the anxious eye—what is to restrain them from advancing to any and all lengths in their invasions of the truth? If the sanctity of this vicarious offering—its acceptance by the Father—its confirmatory sealing by the Holy Ghost—cannot awe them, then what can arrest their recklessness and inspire them with holy reverence? Great truths stand or fall together. Pervert the atonement, and you must corrupt the entire system. It will not answer to leave one sentiment to remind the trembling sinner of its having been offered, nor perpetuate one memorial, pointing distinctly and directly to Calvary. Wherever the ramifications of the doctrine extend—the immediate relations—the remote consequences—all its bearings upon character and condition—all its connexions with law, order, and social welfare—must be traced out and obliterated. If one be left, that one may suggest thoughts and awaken feelings, detrimental to the whole fabrication. If one avenue be unguarded, through it the penitent or believer may make his escape and triumph over the delusion. Faithful to the task, the Papacy has exterminated every thing, that would lead any of its subjects to transact his own spiritual concerns with God through the Mediator, Jesus Christ; the seat of intercession at the right

hand of the Father is hidden in the crowd of other mediators—and the priest is made the means of securing pardon and peace.

The notion of indulgences, as taught by Romanists, stands unrivalled, in the structure of all religions, for the enormities that may be brought into existence by its instrumentality. It may be viewed, indeed, so far as its power extends, as eradicating every real religious sentiment. Had it been limited to its original design, as contemplated by the early church, it would not have had a divine character, it is true, but it would have been harmless in comparison with its more modern developments. That it was a dangerous institution then, we have no doubt; but so soon as the impious idea of “*a meritorious expiatory satisfaction to God*” was identified with it, every species of crime could be sheltered under its broad wing. Viewing it as a bold and daring expedient to fill the treasury of the church, by bartering vice and virtue for money, we admit that it was admirably suited to answer its abominable ends. Contemplating it as an awful invasion of the interests of Christianity, we are amazed at the unmitigated depravity that signalizes its character.

No wonder, that this unholy practice should have aroused the energy of Luther and led to the achievement of the Reformation. Had

it been separated from all its associated ideas—had it stood forth as the solitary vice of Romanism—it would have been sufficient to justify an uncompromising hostility to its authority. The imagination of man cannot conceive a doctrine better calculated to thwart all the experimental operations of Christianity and advance the cause of iniquity, than this same doctrine of indulgences.

The idea of Purgatory tends to augment yet more the spiritual tyranny of Rome. No well informed Papist would seriously attempt to establish this conceit by revelation. “Had it been necessary for us,” says the Bishop of Aire, “to be instructed in such questions, Jesus would doubtless have revealed the knowledge of them. *He has not done so.*” The unreasonableness and unscripturalness of it, however, gives it tremendous power over those, who are trained to discard both the exercise of reason and the study of revelation. If any element were wanting to consummate the influence of this system, such element would be found in the sway it presumes to exert over the invisible world. The spirits of the departed are under its control! Can any thing more be added? Resist its authority at your eternal peril! It has the keys of Heaven and Hell! defy it, if you dare! The subjugation of this world is not enough. The complete triumph over every

noble sentiment of our nature—the perfect management of all our moral interests here—is not enough. It must pursue us into Eternity. Friends surrender us at the grave ; earth-born malice forgets its animosities, when we enter upon the last slumber ; but more intense than friendship, and more unrelenting than malice, it follows the disembodied spirit and wreaks its vengeance in the very presence of Jehovah ! The ambition of warriors has been satisfied with the conquests of the world, but it disdains such bounds—it erects its monuments amid the wonders of Immensity !

The possibility of enlightenment, through the ordinary means of instruction, must be cut off, to give the finishing stroke to this masterpiece of human tyranny. Accordingly, the sacred Scriptures are denounced as unfit for the people. If Romanists would diffuse their own version of the Bible, it would not be so strange, but even this, they refuse to the members of the church. If they adore St. Peter so highly, they might give his Epistles to them, but they dare not proceed so far, for they are sagacious enough to know what would ensue. The only hope of their cruel system is in the ignorance of their subjects ; the only devotion they can expect, is the devotion that springs from darkness ; and therefore, the blessed Bible is refused. What renders this course yet more remarkable, is their

wonderful zeal to diffuse education. Colleges are planted, and charity-schools opened ; general knowledge is communicated ; but yet, the highest, purest, and most essential of all knowledge is repudiated. Is this the conduct of men, who really believe in an hereafter ? If knowledge be requisite for the world, in its temporal relations, is it not much more requisite in view of futurity ?

That some cardinal truths remain in the Papal system cannot be denied. The existence and trinity of the Godhead, the immortality of the soul, and truths of this class, remain unmutilated. One reflection, however, is worthy of notice. The force of these sentiments depends on the relation that they bear to the other and more peculiar facts of Christianity. If therefore they be changed in their connexion with those facts, they must inevitably exert a different influence over the mind. The peculiar truths of Christianity are, if the expression be allowable, spread over its surface, and with them are we brought immediately in contact. There is a wide distinction between the natural and moral in this holy system. Each class of truths has its place ; each aids the other, if the union between them be preserved ; each has its sympathies in the nature of man. The natural sentiments presented by its revelations may be held uninjured, but yet, its moral character may be ut-

terly defaced. If you corrupt the spiritual part of it, you corrupt the channel through which its more remote truths reach us ; and hence, as water is affected by the soil over which it flows, so are they made to take their spirit from those perverted moral principles. Neglecting to draw this distinction, persons often argue that the essence of Christianity remains in the Roman creed, and that consequently it will answer all the designs of the New Testament Theology. We cannot entertain such an opinion. The great doctrines of the Gospel—doctrines that enable it to probe the conscience, regulate the will, and sanctify the wicked heart—are sacrificed by it, and what then is the redeeming benefit of those abstract points, from whose true sympathy we have been separated ? Grant that the mind could even surrender itself to their sway, would their feeble recognition compensate for the loss of all that is attractive and subduing in the plan of salvation ?

A system, whose original moral principles have been diverted from their true sphere of action, may become a tremendous instrument of evil, but it is rendered much more formidable, when extraneous corruptions are fastened on it. The policy of Romanism has been of this kind. Had the doctrines of Christianity been merely perverted it would not have been so dangerous, but it has purposely added

thereto every false motive and fictitious excitement, that the world could furnish. No stretch of its sentiments—no derangement of its harmony—no shifting of its position—considered in themselves alone, could have ever converted it into such a means of moral depravity. The popular features of Philosophy, Heathenism and Judaism, must be incorporated with it. The beauties of Art must be connected with its simplicities. Wherever there is a powerful sentiment to be found—wherever there is an instrument of terror to be secured—wherever there is an example of false virtue and fanciful romance—the grasp of the Papacy is fixed upon it, and henceforth it has its part to play in the amazing scheme. Hence, the slow maturity of its plans and measures in the dark ages. Centuries were required to consolidate and perfect it, for it was ever seeking new aids and forming new ties. It ransacked the whole world to find the best instruments to effect its objects.

The workings of Romanism have corroborated the above statement. Has Heathenism ever exhibited more revolting scenes of personal penance, or has Mohammedanism displayed more bloodthirstiness than it? Had it prevailed in Asia as it has in Europe, would we not have witnessed the same feebleness of intellect, degeneracy of morals, and stagnation of society? Has not the history of

the Papacy been marked by the same wanton indifference to the happiness and lives of its subjects as is seen in the most cruel forms of superstition? Where did it get its fanciful ideas about sin dwelling in the animal body, if not from Eastern Philosophers? Where the institution of cloisters, if not from a Jewish sect? Where physical mortifications, if not from Heathenism? Let it be remembered, therefore, that when we oppose this system, we are opposing almost every error, that has been palmed off upon mankind, under the sacred name of religion. We are making war upon the main elements of Heathenism; we are struggling against those very evils that withered the genius and destroyed the morality of the ancient Gentile world. It is not Christianity corrupted, dreadful as its influence might be, and deserving of all hostility, that we are striving to overthrow. It is a motley mixture of all religions and philosophies—a kind of geological formation, in which stones, shells, fish, and every other thing combine—that we protest against. It is as superstition, that appeals only to the lower faculties of our nature—an enthusiasm, that excites only to disturb—and a fanaticism, that derives its nutriment from malignant emotions—that we are laboring to exterminate.

The constant appeal of Romanism, is to the senses and imagination. Apart from every

thing else, this circumstance would excite our suspicions. Divine truth addresses the conscience. It is to that faculty, so potent in every enlightened mind, that Jehovah speaks, and through it are his claims recognized and obeyed by the affections. To operate on the imagination is altogether different. The position of this attribute in the mental economy is such as to show that it must be held subordinate to reason and conscience, and consequently, whenever the primary appeal is to it, the laws of nature are disregarded. The abode of genuine religion is in the conscience and heart; it distils its holy influence there; and thus combats depravity in its own home. A system may triumph over the imagination, and yet the strong powers of the man be dormant. A religion may be enthroned in it, and yet the citadel of sin be unshaken. The necessary tendency of imaginative excitements is to introduce fictitious feelings and false motives. Acting under their influence, we deceive ourselves; we confound moral distinctions; and harden the heart against correct impressions. The mind becomes seared, and arguments cannot rouse it. The impossibility of changing the opinions of hypochondriacs and lunatics arises mainly from the connexion of imagination with them. Romanists evince a large measure of the same peculiarity. Accustomed to the tyranny of that deceitful faculty,

its exercises are continually mistaken for the emotions of the heart and the decisions of reason ; it blinds as well as enslaves ; and every fresh victory puts the unfortunate subject farther from the ordinary means of moral influence. The wonderful tenacity with which they maintain religious prejudices and bigoted sentiments, springs from the control of imagination.

Had we to view Romanism as a religious system alone, we should hardly know on what principles to explain its singular and anomalous constitution. That perplexity ceases the moment we meditate on its secular designs. Men may abuse spiritual authority separate from all earthly connexions, but there are few temptations to it. The pride of the heart might be flattered by its possession, but, independently of selfish considerations, it could scarcely lead to the formation of a dangerous hierarchy. If great ecclesiastical power be acquired, by means of moral corruption, it will seek to accomplish sinister ends. The limited sphere of the church will never satisfy it ; the political interests of the world must be made tributary to its enlargement. The history of the Papacy demonstrates this truth. Trace its progress from the period of its maturity, and when and where do you behold it acting on spiritual principles alone ? If its pretensions be authorized, it might surely have

trusted to the force of truth and argument, but when and where did it thus pursue its plans? Has it dared to depend on its own intrinsic merits, since the day when its earthly supremacy was conceded? The philosophy of the whole system is found in its political character; it has ever striven to be a kingdom of this world in direct opposition to the declaration of Jesus Christ; and accordingly, its policy has been framed to suit the end. Regarding it in this light, we can understand why it arrogates Catholicity and Infallibility, why it deals in Indulgences and celebrates Mass, why it destroys the atonement of Christ, and extends its grasping arms into Eternity. Abstract religion needs no such supports; it has flourished without them; but political religion must draw them around itself, or it will prove utterly impotent. Its schemes of earthly aggrandizement all arranged, it has never failed to enrich itself by every means possible, selling titles to heaven, and thronging deathbeds with its emissaries, and robbing widows and orphans of their last pittance. No wonder that they have been able to erect such splendid edifices for worship. No wonder that they have often crushed all opposition. Romanists have had the treasures of Christendom under their control. No marvel that Leo the Tenth said, "*O! how profitable has this fable of Jesus been unto us.*"

The attitude, then, that Popery occupies towards us, is not of a simply religious system. If it were, we should discuss it as we would any other spiritual scheme. Examining its principles in the light of revelation, and testing their evangelical tendencies by that unerring rule, we should be confined to that ground, in the decisions of our judgment. Its political nature introduces it into the department of political science, and compels us to try its claims to respect and adoption, by those lights which the wisdom of ages has shed over the laws of social organization. We will now attempt this investigation

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF POPERY.

WAVING for the present any farther consideration of Popery as a professed religion, let us examine it as a political system. Here several facts are entitled to our notice. Let us consider the following, viz.,

#### 1. POPERY CLAIMS SECULAR POWER.

Argued—*First, from the name appropriated to the Pope.* That name is “*The Vicar of Jesus Christ.*” According to the best authorities, “*vicar*” signifies “*a person deputed*

to perform the offices of another—a substitute.” Revelation declares, that Jesus Christ is the “*King of kings*”—“*the Prince of the kings of the earth.*” If then the Papal premises be correct, the Pope represents Jesus Christ in his relation to the nations of the world, and consequently can govern them as his subjects. Heathen emperors have sometimes demanded to be acknowledged as divinely appointed rulers, and Mohammed pretended to be the Prophet of God—but mark ; —Popery advances much farther, and elevates the Pope into the character and office of *the vicar of Jesus !* Secondly, from its own repeated declarations. Refer to the Bull of Pope Boniface III. and Pope Pius V. Thirdly, from its standard authorities. See Den’s Theology, &c. Fourthly, from its past history. See Mosheim’s History, &c. Fifthly, from its present condition, wherever circumstances permit the existence of its secular power. Abridged as that authority is, the principle has never been resigned, and hence we see in Italy *the states of the church*, situated between Lombardy, Tuscany, and Naples, and the Tuscan and Adriatic seas, and numbering over 2,000,000 inhabitants. See *Enc. Americana*, Art. *States of the Church*.

2. IT HAS A MOST ABSOLUTE AND ARBITRARY HEAD.

Argued—*First, from the acknowledged*

*rights of the Pope, as declared by his subjects. Among those rights are prominent the right of passing new laws for the church, and enforcing old enactments—superintendence over the church—ability to dispense with existent laws, if he pleases—presiding over councils—imposition of taxes—establishment of religious orders—censorship over writings—annulling oaths—deposing bishops—granting dispensations.*

*Secondly, from the declarations of Popes. Read the following extract from the Bull of Sixtus V. against Henry king of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé: “The authority given to St. Peter and his successors by the immense power of the Eternal King, excels all the power of earthly kings and princes—it passes uncontrollable sentence on them all,” &c. &c. And again: “We deprive them and their posterity forever of their dominions and kingdoms.”*

### 3. IT VIOLATES THE FUNDAMENTAL LAWS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.

*Proved—First, from its contempt of oaths. The Third Council of Lateran made the obligation or non-obligation of an oath to depend solely upon its utility or non-utility to the interests of the church. If confirmation of this principle be wanted, it may be found in the history of Huss.*

*Secondly, from its imposition of celibacy on its ministerial agents, thus sacrificing all their*

*social sympathies and fitting them for any unnatural work.*

*Thirdly, from the fact, that it reverses the order of things, and makes the whole world exist for itself; employing its resources for self-exaltation, and caring nothing for the welfare of its subjects.*

4. *It vehemently opposes all liberty of conscience and the press.* “From that polluted fountain of indifference, flows that absurd and erroneous doctrine, or rather raving, in favor and defence of ‘*liberty of conscience*,’ for which most pestilential error the course is opened by that entire and wild liberty of opinion which is every where attempting the overthrow of civil and religious institutions; and which the unblushing impudence of some has held forth as an advantage of religion.” Again, “Hither tends that worst and never sufficiently to be execrated and detested *liberty of the press*.” See *Encyclical Letter of Pope Gregory XVI., August 15, 1832.*

5. *It arrays itself uncompromisingly and unrelentingly against every principle of enlightened liberty.* It stigmatizes *liberty of opinion* as unbridled, and calls it *the pest, of all others most to be dreaded in a state.* It contends for the union of church and state. It authorizes force to be used in compelling “*baptized Infidels, such as heretics and apostates, to return to the Catholic faith.*” It

allows no toleration, where it can avoid it, declaring, that "*the rites of other Infidels, viz. pagans and heretics, in themselves considered, are not to be tolerated.*" It declares that "*heretics are rightly punished with death.*" See *Den's Theology*.

6. *It is inconsistent with the relations of different nations.* The fundamental principles of the "*law of nations*" are, that each nation ought to be left in the peaceable enjoyment of that liberty it has derived from nature—that nations are possessed of equal natural rights—and that each nation is bound to promote the welfare of all other nations, so far as it consistently can. Resulting from the natural independence of nations is the right to judge of what "*its conscience demands and of what it can and cannot do.*" See *Vattel's Law of Nations*. Each nation is consequently at perfect liberty to determine the ground on which all forms of religion shall be placed, provided that liberty be not so employed as to injure the interests of religion itself. The political authority of Rome discards such a right, and sets itself proudly above it. Witness the pretensions of Boniface III., and hear his language: "*Know thou art subject to us as well in temporals as in spirituals.*" Witness the fact, that the senate of Sweden having condemned Trollius, Archbishop of Upsal, for the crime of rebellion, to spend his life in

a monastery, Pope Leo X. excommunicated the whole senate, and sentenced it to rebuild a fortress belonging to the Archbishop, which it had destroyed, and to pay a fine of a hundred thousand ducats to the deposed Prelate. Acting on the same principle, we behold Paul V. proclaiming an edict against Venice for passing laws that displeased him, and Pius V. declaring that all princes who should authorize new taxes in their territory without his consent, would be excommunicated. See *same authority quoted above*. Who can possibly reconcile such conduct with the relations of different nations? If these principles were carried out by other authorities, where would the end of strife and bloodshed be?

The supposed supremacy of Rome gives it the power to bestow ecclesiastical appointments on whomsoever it chooses, all over the world. It controls every diocese; it is supreme over every bishop and priest. Can any man believe this to be in harmony with the law of nations? Wherever Romanists are found, they owe paramount allegiance to the Pope; his will is supreme law; and hence, at any moment, the entire Romish population of a country may be placed by the command of *his Holiness* in direct hostility to its laws and institutions. "*This practice*, says Vattel, "*is equally contrary to the law of nations and the principles of common policy.*"

Let us suppose that the principle had a different application. Imagine that the agents of the Papacy in a distant country were commissioned to engage in secular business—to teach, to labor, to trade—under the same binding restrictions that now fetter them. There would be a direct collision with the lawful sovereignty of that country, and every patriot would resist such invasions with the most determined bravery. Do the religious connexions of the principle change its nature? Do they soften its harsh features and make its odiousness less repulsive? To guard its religious interests is one of the first duties of nations, but how can it be effected, if papistical claims are to be respected? A foreign head in such sacred matters, is no less dangerous than in secular interests.

7. *It contravenes the arrangements of Providence.* The obvious plan of Providence is, that distinct nations should exist. The unity of the human race has been most clearly and amply revealed in the Scriptures, while, at the same time, its division into different bodies is fully disclosed. The confusion of tongues at Babel—the diffusion of mankind into the various portions of the earth—the recognition of those isolating circumstances at the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit, and the preparation of the Apostles for evangelizing the different nations—would all seem to confirm this view. Agreeably to

this fact, it has been found that civilization has been promoted and religion advanced by the separate and independent existence of nations. Rome endeavored to sway her imperial sceptre over all the world, and fell a victim to her opposition to Providential plans.

The political policy of Popery is strangely at variance with this ordination of God. The magnificent vision of one vast empire lives constantly before its fancy, and it ardently desires its realization. *Unity of State*, as well as *unity of Church*, is its motto. Its schemes are as extensive as the race of mankind. Mountains and oceans raise no barriers before it. Sands and snows present no obstacles to its far-reaching ambition. Nothing less than the world can afford it contentment.

8. *Its principles tend to prevent all social improvement.* Society is progressive. The savage state is not natural, it is the effect of sin. Men become barbarous by extinguishing all humane sentiments. The means of civilization and refinement are afforded us by God, and we are responsible for their use. The influence of Judaism was favorable to intellectual, physical, and social advancement. Compare the Israelite of the desert with the Jew of the Prophetic age—compare the era of Moses with the era of David—compare the happy homesteads of the elect tribes with

the domestic life of the Patriarchs—and you see the progress of society, under divine superintendence. The most effective instrument of civilization ever known to man, is found in Christianity, and to it are we indebted for all the triumphs of modern mind. Popery opposes all such social advancement. If Europe has been moving forward for several centuries in art and science, it has been because of its pursuing a different policy from that of the Papacy. Let any man look at Spain and Ireland, and he will observe the legitimate social effects of this ruinous system.

Had it not been for Popery, the “*dark ages*” had not so completely withered the intellect of Europe. Had it been unknown, the horrible Revolution in France had not transcended all bounds of humanity. If we be not mistaken, the celebrated De Tocqueville—himself a Romanist—attributes the aversion of the French nation to Christianity, much more to its corruptions than to the system itself.

One peculiarity of the social policy of this scheme is worthy of notice. It cannot change to suit circumstances. Any alteration would compromise its boasted infallibility. It follows, then, that it must treat all men, in all conditions, according to the same fixed principles. To modify its plans so as to agree with the developments of society—to take

advantage of times and seasons—to encourage a growing taste for culture and refinement—would be to renounce its favorite dogmas. It must therefore lead to social degeneracy. A system that interdicts private judgment, freedom of conscience, and liberty of the press—a system that registers such names as Sydney, Addison, Hale, Milton, and Locke in its Prohibitory Index, and denies its subjects the privilege of reading their immortal productions—a system that is founded in ignorance and supported by tyranny—a system that confounds the plainest distinctions of vice and virtue—must, if faithful to its own maxims, degrade society and extinguish all noble aspirations.

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## CHAPTER VI.

APPLICATION OF THE FOREGOING FACTS TO THE  
CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS OF OUR  
COUNTRY.

REGARDING Popery both as a religious and political system, we shall now endeavor to trace its bearings, in each relation, on the interests of the United States.

Considered first, *as a religion*, the following reflections may be worthy of notice.

1. *It aims to exert an altogether different influence over American mind, from that which is exerted by the religion of Protestants.*

The elements of the Romish system, as taught by its advocates and understood by its opponents, form a perfect contrast with the doctrines of Christianity, as held by Protestants. There are certain points maintained by both parties, but those points do not constitute the vitality of their respective creeds. Romanism admits no authority superior to itself; Protestantism acknowledges the supremacy of revelation. Romanism sacrifices reason and destroys private judgment; Protestantism supports them both, in due subordination to divine truth. Romanism undervalues the atonement, to exalt its superstitions; Protestantism presents it as the only hope of our lost world. Romanism overthrows true faith by blending essentials and non-essentials together; Protestantism carefully distinguishes between them. Romanism puts the blessings of salvation into the hands of the church; Protestantism leaves them to be appropriated by Jesus Christ to those who comply with the conditions of grace. Romanism is unfriendly to real holiness and tends to encourage sin; Protestantism aims at purity of heart and life. Let the contrast be extended to the minutiae of the two systems, and they will be seen to uphold

antagonistical principles—the one, tampering with all things sacred, bartering the mercies of the gospel for money, exciting fictitious sentiments, pandering to the most corrupt vices, invading the sovereignty of Heaven—the other, perpetuating the original simplicities of revelation, dealing honestly and earnestly with human consciences, relying on the Holy Spirit, eschewing all superstitions.

If we were required to single out the main characteristic of the religious system of Rome, we should probably not err, were we to fix on *the doctrine of eternal damnation*, as perverted by it. The prominence of this truth, in the great scheme of Christianity, entitles it to the first place in all religious creeds. It is this doctrine that vindicates alike the justice and mercy of God, invests the principles of Christianity with the most tremendous sanctions, reveals the necessity of salvation, and urges it, with surpassing force, upon the acceptance of sinful man. Its announcement in Scripture places it on *specific grounds*, and associates it with the tenderest sentiments. Inspiration guards it against all connexions with malevolence. It is there presented as the penalty of violated law—as the instrument of divine benevolence—free from all vindictiveness—free from all selfishness. Popery does not so regard it. The awful doctrine of final punishment, in its hands, be-

comes a church-power, and is levelled against all who dare to dissent from its claims.

Scripture threatens the dreadful judgments of God only upon the impenitent and incorrigible, but Popery pronounces them upon all its opposers. Its hell is the hell of dissent. It allows no hope to those who differ from its creed, but, irrespective of moral character, consigns them indiscriminately to everlasting torments. The natural effect of such a revolting sentiment is to engender the most virulent fanaticism in the hearts of its advocates, and to give them a most terrible instrument of ghostly domination over all within their reach. Wielding such a doctrine—without the checks of benevolence—without the fear of God—they are able to command the emotions and hopes of every individual to whom it can be applied. A system, deriving its character from a malignant sentiment, must be malignant in all its operations. It will appeal to the lowest faculties of human nature. If it gain its objects, it will be by overthrowing every noble and elevating feeling. Its superstructure will be erected on the foundation of slavish fear.

If, now, these principles should prevail in our country, truth would be exchanged for falsehood, benevolence for malignity, and sanctity for profaneness. Another kind of influence would be executed. The appeal

would be to fear. The operations of reason and conscience would be set at naught, and men would be plied with all the force of terror. Should the sentiment of fear remain dormant, what would follow? There could be no impression—there could be no basis for experience. The choice then would be between fear and wickedness. All who understand human nature, would conclude that, in thousands of cases, the latter alternative would be chosen. Let a supposition be presented. Imagine that Popery is free from all other objections; imagine it to teach the general doctrines of Christianity, in all other respects, save the feature under consideration. We hold it to be susceptible of the clearest moral proof, that this single error would incapacitate it for the office of true religion. The power of Christianity lies in its influence over every sentiment and passion of our constitution. It avails itself of every principle belonging to the mind, and sympathizes with every affection pertaining to the heart. Popery follows an opposite plan. It rejects the aid of every thing but fear. The natural consequence must be, a corresponding enfeeblement of its power, and in the ratio of that enfeeblement, it becomes unfit for popular reformation.

2. *It changes the aspect of virtue and vice, so far as its agency extends, and places them on a fictitious foundation.*

If Popery be rancorous against its enemies, it is proportionably indulgent to its friends. The leading feature of its creed makes impiety consist in hostility to the church, and *vice versa*, piety consists in attachment to it. Deny this and what follows? Impiety and piety cease to be opposites. One rule for heretics—another rule for the faithful! Strange logic, but stranger religion! If then you be in the church, nothings remains to be effected. It has a fund of merit to cover all your transgressions! It has the power of absolution. Revel in crime and riot in iniquity; the grant of pardon may be easily secured! The connexion between sin and punishment is thus broken. The commission of any enormity introduces not the transgressor to the awful law of God, but renders him amenable to the church.

The necessary effect of such principles is an extensive and unbounded demoralization of society. The fear of God is suspended; the solemnities of the last judgment destroyed. Facts confirm these reasonings. The state of morals in Catholic countries beggars all description. Heathenism would not tolerate the vices that they exhibit. The sacredness of domestic life—the authority of law—the security of property—the sanctity of oaths—existence itself, are all despised. Popes themselves have been guilty of all manner of crimes. Priests have blushed at no pollution. Every iniquity has been practised under the holy

name of religion. If these things had been the accidental effects of the system, it would be different, but they bear its legitimate fruits. Wherever it prevails, it will produce the same horrible consequences.

There have, indeed, been times of extraordinary corruption in the history of Romanism, and there have been times of extraordinary reformation. It was so after the Reformation began under Luther. But who will assert, that this improvement was founded on moral principles? Did the Papacy renounce any of its odious doctrines? Not one. Did it abate a solitary claim? Not one. Did it offer a single atonement for its former impurities and impieties? Not one. It did pretend to a reformation, but it was merely external. It resigned none of its doctrines and demands. The power of rising Protestantism drove it to this outward change. Its corruptions had been exposed before; the inhabitants of the beautiful region of the Rhone and Garonne had unveiled them; the yoke of bondage was thrown off and its authority assailed; but it could manage the revolt by physical force, and, therefore, no reformation was needed. It was not so in the days of Luther, and consequently its pretended improvement was forced upon it, and it was merely circumstantial.

The moral tendencies of Popery are not to

be estimated by its condition and effects in countries where Protestantism prevails. Public opinion, under such circumstances, is too powerful for it. If it displayed its principles and executed its measures without reserve, in Protestant nations, it would shock their sensibilities, awaken their animosities, and call forth an expression of just displeasure. To understand its true nature, let it be studied where it permits no rival. Look at it in Spain and Portugal, and its hideousness is unmasked.

Popery in the ascendant, and Popery struggling to acquire a foothold, are not similar in their external manifestations. The one commands ; the other courts. The one is reckless alike of means and ends ; the other is cautious and calculating. The one is the tyrant of the dark ages ; the other is the fascinating demagogue of polished times. Look at the tiger in his quiet cage, and his eye expresses no ferocity ; look at him in his native jungles, and it wears the fierceness of destruction.

Should this system spread and triumph in our land, have we any right to expect a state of morals and manners different from Italy and South America ? Rather should we conclude, that its enormities would here transcend its former history. Reactions are always violent. If Popery prevail among us, it will develope, amid the ruins of our freedom, its

worst qualities. The restraints that have been thrown around it being removed, it will repay its past humiliations by greater acts of violence and impurity, than ever marked its history.

3. *The genius of Popery unfits it for our national tastes and habits.*

The influence of religious systems depends greatly on national character. The structure of Mohammedanism accords with Asiatic temperament. Had Europe been its arena, instead of Asia, it must have been vanquished. The same principle applies to Popery. It suits certain nations, if indeed falsehood and corruption can be said to suit any community. It finds in the indolent Italian—it finds in the lasciviousness of Southern Europe—it finds in the ignorance and barbarity of South America—ready sympathy and cheerful acquiescence. American mind is altogether different. It is bold, fearless, and inquisitive. It is impatient of dictation. It has been trained to think for itself. It prizes the Holy Scriptures. It abhors superstition. If, then, Popery advance among us, it must change our whole character. All that we have learned must be unlearned. All that we have loved must be surrendered, our very identity must be sacrificed.

4. *Its general diffusion in our country would be followed by corresponding Infidelity and Licentiousness.*

The spread of an unnatural and unreasonable form of religion in a cultivated and an uncultivated community, is not characterized by the same results. Let it be diffused in a benighted region and among an ignorant people, and its chances of success are great. Let it be diffused among a people highly civilized, and it will produce unbelief and immorality. The incongruity of its principles with the laws of God and man, will be plainly perceived, and men, glad of any excuse to obliterate all memorials of the Divine Presence and all tokens of the Divine Government, will enter upon a wild crusade against truth and piety.

It was so in France. The absurdities of Romanism made that nation a nation of Infidels. Could the religion which countenanced the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the destruction of Port-Royal—which had upheld Inquisitions—which had taken sides with Feudal oppressors—which had fattened on human blood and piled up a pyramid of human bones—could that religion be divine? It could not appear so to Infidelity. It was an outrage on justice and truth. It was an insult to reason. Had there been a pure religion in that ill-fated country, how different might the condition of things have been!

It would be so in America. Thousands would never regard Popery as a Divine Re-

ligion. Thousands would have no other ideas of Christianity, but what Popery gave them. Rather than yield to such spiritual fanaticism—rather than submit to such galling bondage—they would discard all religious sentiments, and seek refuge in the negations of Infidelity. The last check of crime removed—the last security of virtue overthrown—the maddened populace would be resigned to the sway of passion, and our land be converted into the border-region of the lowest world. A pure Christianity is now the religion of our country. Destroy it, and can Popery take its place? Never—never. Infidelity will occupy its former position. If daylight be extinguished, darkness follows. If Jehovah retire, Satan assumes the control.

We now proceed to view Popery *as a political system*, and to trace out its bearing upon our national interests. The following reflections suggest themselves:

1. *Its religious principles would form the basis of its secular policy, and consequently would render that policy most pernicious to us.*

Two kinds of union between church and state may be imagined. One is, where the civil law sustains the church—where the legislature partly represents it—and where it is a constituent, among other elements, of government. The other is, where the church controls the state, and employs it only for its

purposes. There is a vast difference between these two forms of union. Did Popery admit the state to be a joint power with itself, its arrogance would be diminished and its sway would be less alarming ; but it admits no such co-partnership. It constitutes the state. Senates may resolve, but it annuls. Kings may originate plans, but it puts a veto on them. The mass of the people may demand the removal of grievances, but it answers them with the thunders of the Vatican.

The religious principles of Popery, we have seen, are corrupt and fanatical. Its secular policy grows out of them. As is the religion, then, so is the government. Infallibility marks its decisions ; divinity stamps its acts. Rebellion against it is treason against God. Establish such a theory, and what is man under it ? A mere machine—a thinking brute. If you oppress him under other governments, in his temporal concerns, he has a blessed refuge in his religious interests ; but here, you despoil him of all that is valuable in the one, and venerable in the other ; you leave him nothing ; insult and mockery consummate tyranny.

Any process of argument, tending to prove the injuriousness of Popery, as a religious system, also goes to show its unfitness as a political theory, founded as the latter is on the former. If it has been exhibited, as inca-

pable of fulfilling the office of pure religion among us, it follows, that it cannot answer the ends of good government.

2. *It sets itself against all republican sentiments, and denies those rights which we hold sacred.*

Did it allow the exercise of private judgment and the free interchange of thought—did it encourage education—it would undermine its own foundations ; and hence, we find it the avowed enemy of these things. It has not disguised its deep abhorrence of them. The sovereignty of the people is the object of its unmitigated aversion. All rights and privileges belong to the Pontiff. If these principles spread and prevail here, liberty must perish. We value the liberty of thought, but Popery would not tolerate it one moment in us. We value the freedom of the press, but Popery would crush it. We hold the sovereign power to emanate from the people, but Popery proclaims the supremacy of the Pontiff. We hold that men are entitled to the protection of their persons and property, but Popery makes both dependent on the will of its Head. Could there be a more striking contrast between two opposites ?

If a republican government becomes oppressive, the people have the means to remedy the evil ; but let Popery fasten itself on us, and we have no check—no resort. We are paralyzed—we are deadened.

3. *The political principles of Popery would subjugate us to foreign domination.*

A home tyranny is deplorable, but a foreign tyranny is infinitely more to be dreaded. The one may have the remnants of sympathy ; all redeeming sentiments may not have been withered ; but the other has no restraint upon its power, and no motive for compassion. The one may be reached by public opinion ; it dwells amid the people, and their complaints may affect it ; but the other is far distant ; you cannot gain access to it. Such a tyranny would Popery settle on us. A foreign Pope would be our head, and foreign ecclesiastics would be its agents. Every thing indigenous to America would vanish, and European customs and vices would be substituted. Our separation and distance from the old world have always been regarded by statesmen as incalculably advantageous to us ; but all these benefits would be forfeited by the success of Popery. Compelled to participate in its intrigues—forced to enter into its wars—reduced to the level of its degraded population—our country would lose all its distinguishing traits of civilization, and sink into general grossness and stupidity. A dependent state, our wealth would be drawn off and our resources exhausted, to pamper the pride and gratify the ambition of a foreign sovereign. We know of no evil greater than this would be. Civil war

would be preferable to it. The annihilation of the whole community would be far better than such a dreadful doom. It would undo every thing that we have done. It would condense all miseries, and carry all misfortunes in itself. Labor would be without reward, and life without charms. The last sanctuary of liberty, raised by valor, cemented by blood, and consecrated by prayer, would be laid in the dust.

Such are the relations of Popery, in its religious and political aspects, to our country. Such are its legitimate tendencies and fruits. The nature of the system—its history—its professed aims—all unite to endorse the preceding statements. If we were arguing its merits abstractly, without the guides of the past and the observation of the present, we might draw wrong conclusions and charge illogical consequences on it ; but we may surely be exempted from this suspicion, when we quote its own language and present its own records. Candor demands that we should suffer every system to speak for itself. Courtesy requires that its advocates should be patiently heard. Protestants have evinced this candor and courtesy. “ *Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant !*”

Our country is the only great country of the modern world, that has not been down-trodden by Popery. Envable and illustrious

distinction ! We are devoutly thankful to the King of nations for it. We prize it above all ordinary blessings. Shall we therefore close our eyes upon its pollutions—smile at its pretensions—and resign ourselves to dreamy indolence ? Is it not in our midst, pressing its claims and urging its conquests ? Is it not growing more and more courageous and insolent ? Whatever may be the final result in the Providence of God, our present duty is apparent. Every motive of patriotism and religion demands that we should unveil its hideousness and resist its assumptions. If we fail to arrest its progress, we shall have, at least, the satisfaction of remembering that we exerted all our strength to thwart it.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### PROGRESS AND PRESENT STATE OF POPERY IN OUR COUNTRY.

A LARGE proportion of the early inhabitants of our country, were deeply attached to the principles of Protestantism. Roman Catholicism was not prevalent among them. If we except Maryland, its influence upon the colonies was inconsiderable. Later in the history

of the country, the Spanish possessions were under its sway ; but neither the one nor the other seems to have created any apprehension. Almost every thing, in the incipient state of our country, indicated that it would be the chosen home of a pure Christianity. True, it was anxiously contemplated as a missionary field by European Papists. If the Queen of Spain patronized the project of settling the new continent, it was to convert the Heathen. The “brave and devout Coligny” endeavored to plant the cherished faith in Florida ; but all those efforts were crowned with small success. We regard this fact as interesting. The treasures of South America attracted the attention of Catholic Spain, and the empire of Montezuma fell beneath the foreign invasion ; but no splendid cities—no valuable mines—no hoarded wealth—aroused her cupidity here.

Through circumstances that may justly be regarded as providential, the doctrines and dogmas of Popery were prevented from taking extensive root in the infancy of our condition. It must therefore be compelled to resign all antecedent claims, and to acknowledge that Protestantism laid the foundation and reared the superstructure of our freedom.

The history of Popery in this country must be considered in connexion with the above facts, or we shall fail to appreciate it properly.

Let it not be forgotten, then, that it had to start under serious embarrassments, and struggle with a rival that already had the mass of the community in its favor. Amid these difficulties, it has advanced in an almost incredible manner. A brief view of its progress and present condition may be presented.

1. The first Roman Catholic Bishop in the United States was consecrated in 1790, in Baltimore, Md. So long as this country was connected with England, it was under the jurisdiction of the "Apostolic Vicar" of London; but after the Revolution, a Bishopric was created by Pius VI., at Baltimore. Another Bishop was appointed in 1800. Four new Bishoprics were formed in 1808: three more in 1820 and 1821. So rapid was the increase, that in 1841 the Church had SIXTEEN DIOCESES in our country. *See Metropolitan Catholic Almanac for 1841.*

2. In 1835, the Romanists had about seven Colleges; sixteen other Seminaries; and thirty-three Convents. It now has twenty-four Institutions and Colleges for young men; thirty-five Female Institutions under the Sisters of Charity.

3. They control thirteen Periodicals.

4. Churches and Stations.

|                                          |   |     |
|------------------------------------------|---|-----|
| Number of Churches and Stations in 1835, | . | 383 |
| Do. do. do. in 1841,                     | . | 933 |

5. Ministers.

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Number of Ministers in 1835, | 340 |
| Do. do. in 1841,             | 436 |
| Otherwise employed, do. do.  | 109 |

## 6. Population.

|                                               |           |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Roman Catholic Population computed in 1835 at | 600,000   |
| Do. do. do. do. 1841, at                      | 1,300,000 |
| Do. do. do. do. 1844, "                       | 2,000,000 |

## 7. Orders.

*Male*.—1, Jesuits ; 2, Sulpitians ; 3, Dominicans ; 4, Augustinians ; 5, Lazarists ; 6, Eudists ; 7, Redemptorists ; 8, Fathers of Mercy.

*Female*—1, Sisters of Charity ; 2, Carmelite Nuns ; 3, Ursulines ; 4, Ladies of the Sacred Heart ; 5, Sisters of the Visitation ; 6, Sisters of Mercy ; 7, Ladies of Providence ; 8, Sisters of Loretto ; 9, Nuns of St. Dominick ; 10, Sisters of St. Joseph ; 11, Sisters of Notre Dame ; 12, Ladies of the Retreat. See 1st Vol. *Christian World*.

## 8. Foreign Aid.

|                                               |           |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Received from France in 1824, '5, '6, '7, '8, | \$61,666  |
| Do. do. Propaganda, in 1828,                  | \$110,000 |
| Do. do. Lyons, in 1842,                       | \$177,000 |

We gather several instructive conclusions from these facts.

*First, We learn, that a new era has recently begun in the history of American Roman Catholicism.*

It has overcome its former difficulties and assumed vast importance. One out of every seventeen in the country, is under its potent sway.

*Secondly, We see its extensive organization.*

Various orders are engaged with all zeal in the work, aided by the mighty press.

*Thirdly, We discover its unity with European Popery.*

Immense sums of money are now annually sent to this country to advance the Papal enterprise. The fair inference therefore is—*American Popery is the creature and agent of European Popery.*

A few general observations may now be presented. Had we to combat American Popery on its own abstract merits, we should not feel the same solicitude ; but when we are forced to regard it as the instrument of a Foreign Power, we are alive to serious apprehensions, and summoned to its resistance, by motives the most sacred, and obligations the most imperative. Intimations have already been given of evil designs. The machinery is here, but the moving hand is far distant. It is concealed from popular observation ; it operates quietly ; but it is laboring zealously, and is resolved on its end. We behold a powerful organization in Austria, the “ *Leopold Foundation*,” directing its energies to the diffusion of Popery in our country, and a scheme started in Great Britain to colonize immense numbers of Papists in the Valley of the West. The annexed extract is from a letter of M. Rézé, a priest and pupil of the Propaganda, written from the West to a friend in Europe :

“ *We shall see the truth triumph ; the tem-*

*ples of idols will be overthrown, and the seat of falsehood will be brought to silence. This is the reason that we conjure all the Christians of Europe to unite, in order to ask of God the conversion of these unhappy infidels or heretics. What a happiness, if, by our feeble labors and our vows, we shall so merit as to see the savages of this diocese civilized, and all the United States embraced in the same unity of that Catholic Church, in which dwells truth and temporal happiness !”*

The aim of the Papacy now is to recover its lost authority over the nations of the earth. Its own declarations and acts demonstrate this fact. Witness its efforts in Syria, Persia, and the Sandwich Islands ; witness the movements of its *sixty-five Prelates in the British Dominions* ; witness the rapid increase of the Society at Lyons, the chief supporter of Romish Missions ; and especially mark the circumstance, that those missions throughout the globe are said to have been recently placed in the hands of crafty, politic, and resolute Jesuits. Its keen eye is especially on our beloved country. Priests are flocking hither ; money follows them ; and institutions of learning are rising in all directions. If this were a pure zeal and consecrated to pure objects, we should rejoice in it ; but as it is, we can only view it as a scheme of earthly aggrandizement.

It may be useful to trace out some of the causes that have contributed to the spread of Romanism in our nation. We notice :

*I. Emigration.*

According to good authority, the following number of Emigrants arrived in New York, during several successive years, viz :

|         |   |   |   |        |
|---------|---|---|---|--------|
| In 1830 | . | . | . | 30,224 |
| " 1831  | . | . | . | 31,739 |
| " 1832  | . | . | . | 48,589 |
| " 1833  | . | . | . | 41,702 |
| " 1834  | . | . | . | 48,110 |
| " 1835  | . | . | . | 35,303 |
| " 1836  | . | . | . | 60,541 |

If the arrivals of Emigrants in other ports be added, we shall have an almost incredible number.

Every one knows, that a very large proportion of these foreigners are Roman Catholics, degraded by superstition and demoralized by vice. The political aspect of this subject is beginning to attract considerable attention ; but with it, so considered, we have no present connexion. We are politicians in a higher and better sense ; we are politicians only so far as Christianity makes us such. Can the fact, however, be disguised, that the introduction of so large a class of Papists into this country, is calculated to endanger our liberties ?

## II. *The Lethargy of Protestants.*

Several causes have united to produce this lethargy.

1. *The true merits of American Popery have not been understood.* Few have carefully examined the subject. Few have imagined its vast importance. Popery has been regarded as a decrepit and worn-out system. It has been associated with distant times and countries. We have deceived ourselves. We have been flattered by soft words and unpretending conduct. The spirit of American Popery has usually been a spirit of external humility, and we have argued its character from individual and circumstantial exhibitions. The writer of these pages could name instances, in which the greatest blindness to Romanism, on the part of Protestants, has been produced by this circumstance.

2. *False ideas of charity and kindness have had no small share in it.*

Laxity of principle is not charity. Indifference to error is not charity. The charity of Jesus Christ—the charity of St. Paul—the charity of the Apostle of Love—did not prevent them from exposing falsehood and evil. They made no compromise with false doctrines. The true design of charity is not to keep us silent and inactive in respect of heresy and corruption, but to give us a tender and compassionate spirit in opposing them.

Did we improperly assail Popery, that would be uncharitableness, but if we expose its features, and resist its progress, charity is not wounded.

3. *Unsound views of correct controversy.*

Numbers have thought, that if Popery was opposed by the Protestant pulpit and press, its interests would thereby be aided. If controversy were necessarily persecution, it might be regarded as pernicious ; but we might as well say that controversy with sin would tend to enhance it, as to say that a temperate and lucid exhibition of the evils of Popery, would promote it. The ordained means of opposing error and heresy, is truth ; and shall we make God the author of a means of influence to advance his enemies ? If Popery be a good cause, it has nothing to fear from truth ; if it be a bad cause, it ought to be exposed.

4. *Overweening confidence in our Institutions.*

Nations love to think themselves destined to perpetuity. Had the Grecian or Roman been told in his palmy days, that the light would fade on Mars-hill, and the Eagle fold his weary pinions and die, he would have scorned the thought. Ennobled by our institutions, and satisfied with the regulated liberty they secure, we are prone to believe them superior to decay and destruction. If indeed it could be shown, that Popery would never in-

terfere with our politics, (an anomaly in its history,) it would still be a sacred duty to raise our voices and exert our whole influence against it; but that obligation is vastly enhanced by its known animosity to free institutions. No axiom can be more true, than that Popery and Freedom cannot live together. If it triumph here, our civil liberties must be extinguished.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### GENERAL REMARKS.

A TRAIN of thought, anticipated partly in the preceding observations, may properly form the subject of this chapter.

The past history and present aspects of Popery being somewhat dissimilar in certain features, we are liable to erroneous impressions respecting its true character. The fundamental tenets of this system are the same they have ever been: the connexions of those tenets with outward manifestations are not marked by the same uniformity. The great Reformation taught it a most useful lesson. It hastened to resign its most vulnerable practices, and made a pompous show of purification. So far as this is concerned, it confessed the propriety of those changes for

which the advocates of reform contended, and endorsed the bill of heavy charges drawn up against it. Held in abeyance by the formidable attitude of Protestantism, it has never dared to bring back its former array of instrumentalities, but has been contented with comparative quiescence. Its more recent movements indicate, indeed, a return to the policy of departed centuries, but great cautiousness has characterized the procedure. Looking upon the external forms of Popery, we might find some reason for the comparative indifference of Protestants to its spread ; but surely this is reasoning on fallacious premises. If the distinctive doctrines of this creed remain unaltered, are we to flatter ourselves with vain hopes ? The warrant of persecution—the germ of the most cruel hierarchy the world ever knew—is embodied in them, and awaits the influence of circumstances to call it forth. The poisonous vine is as deadly when stripped of foliage and fruit, as when it possesses them.

Should a powerful party arise in our land, advocating sentiments destructive of national rights and social security, but yet abstaining from open conflict with them, every patriotic citizen would feel himself called on to rise up against them. Patriotism would teach that we are alike bound to guard against approaching danger, as well as to brave danger,

whenever it arrives. Such is our position in view of Popery. There may be no immediate peril—there may be no instant jeopardy—but is there therefore no need of alarm—no occasion for resistance? Our obligations extend to posterity, our responsibilities are associated with distant generations, and consequently we are to act with reference to them.

We present above but one side of the subject: it has other aspects. Grant that Popery has no political designs on our institutions—grant that it proposes to make America an exception to its settled policy—is it less a moral and a social evil? Is it less opposed to evangelical religion—less detrimental to the happiness and welfare of society? Here, we stand on indisputable ground: here, we surrender politics and argue on religious principles solely. The duty of Christian men to withstand the progress of doctrinal error and pernicious philosophy, is as clear as any part of revelation; and the whole force of this duty rests upon American Protestants. If Popery is the Antichrist of the Bible—if it is the man of sin—if it is corrupt Babylon—then, every motive that urged the Biblical writers to denounce it, is transferred to us, and we must resign our claims to the dignity of union with them, in the bonds of faith and love, if we suppress our uncompromising hostility to its advancements.

We have been gravely told, by those who have no sympathy whatever with Romanism, that, amid all its errors, it preserves sufficient truth to be the means of salvation, and that it answers well for a large class of the world. Far be it from us to close the gates of heaven against Papists indiscriminately ; we believe there are sincere and devout men among them. If our Heavenly Father make allowance for ignorance and prejudice, we are required to cultivate the same spirit. Is it sound logic, however, to argue the nature of the system from a limited number of cases ? The same course of argument would nullify our opposition to Heathenism. It would have prevented the Apostles from preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles. It would have destroyed the mission of the Redeemer to the world. The general tendencies of the Popish system may be overcome in certain instances : the influence of the Holy Ghost may enable some individually to triumph over its false doctrines ; but this is not the universal rule. The regular operation of its principles, is the standard by which we are to try it. Where Popery has had one Thomas à Kempis, or one Pascal, how many thousands of a different character has it produced ?

The conjecture that Popery is a useful system to numbers of people, is equally unworthy of confidence. If this were true, in

what light would we be compelled to regard true Christianity? And how should we understand the arrangements of Providence? A dim light is best for a diseased eye, but disease renders it best. If Popery incapacitates men for the exercise of reason, and unfits them for the intelligent appreciation of scriptural religion, are we then to acknowledge that it is the most useful system for them? Singular perversion of logic—still more singular perversion of Inspiration!

Let us take a plain illustration: Despots may argue that despotism is the safest government for their subjects, and, in supposed justification of their opinion, point to the degraded condition of the mass of the people. The whole argument resolves itself into this: The natural effect of despotism is, to degrade the people; and because they are degraded, despotism becomes necessary. A thing is thus proven by itself! It is just so with Popery. Prostrating every power of our nature, and shutting out every beam of light that might illuminate the path of life, it is then to be acknowledged as the most suitable system for us. How unlike Christianity! Unveiling her beauties before the nations, and radiating her lustre throughout the world, she takes her stand far in advance of the most cultured and improved society—even on the farthest limit of actual realization—and

dispenses omnipotent influence to enable mankind to experience all her blessings. Progress as we may, we cannot pass beyond her station. Science may enlarge, art may improve, civilization refine, but Christianity is still before us. Let Popery aim at such an object, and it would meet with nothing but ridicule. It contains no provision for social expansion. It has no means of authority for exalted humanity. It has no Millennium in its scheme. As night is indebted to the absence of the sun, so is it indebted to the absence of true Christianity.

Does the Papist proudly point us to the revival of letters just before the Reformation, as an offset to the above observations? Let him do it, and we will summon the history of this period to show that it was the result of causes independent of Popery and beyond its control.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### CIRCUMSTANCES FAVORABLE TO THE SPREAD OF POPERY IN OUR COUNTRY.

THAT there are various circumstances, more or less favorable to the future spread of

Popery in our country, can hardly be doubted. The attention of the reader is invited to some of them.

1. *Our citizens, as such, have no hereditary hostility to it.*

The authority of the Papacy never extended over these lands—never punished rebellious heretics and subdued opposition to its dogmas here. Our forefathers were not condemned by its inquisitions, and burned at its stakes. We have consequently no hereditary hatred to it. If we had participated in the bloody struggles of the Reformation, and had our ancestors been cruelly punished by its edicts, we should have inherited a most inveterate aversion to all its principles and policy. The memory of illustrious patriots—the sanctity of their graves—the splendor of their deeds—would have inspired us with unmitigated horror of its pretensions. Such is not our position. If it be opposed, it must be on other grounds.

2. *Our laws afford it equal protection with all other forms of religion.*

The wise policy of our laws is to protect religion without lending a direct support to it. In its light, all denominations are viewed alike. The principle of equality occupies, among us, the ground of toleration in other communities, with the additional advantages that it brings along with it. We would not

have it otherwise. If Providence has raised no natural barrier against false systems, it is no province of government to do it, unless political objects are directly associated with it. To call in such secular aid to put down religious heresy and corruption, is tacitly to acknowledge the ineffectualness of moral means. Should the end be thereby gained, there is certainly no homage paid to the potency of truth.

The policy of putting Popery, so far as civil law is concerned, on a level with other forms of religion, has become so apparent, that where it was once high treason for one of its prelates to be found, the whole country is now open to them.

The liberality of the American constitution secures to Popery the same rights and privileges that are regarded in other forms of religion.

3. *It does not scruple to employ its subjects, in their political relations, to effect its objects.*

Proof of this assertion is found in the course of Bishop Hughes, of New-York. No one can mistake the signs of the times in this particular. If the sacred Scriptures are to be banished from common schools, or school funds to be drawn off to sustain their sectarian projects, they are bold to use their church members to accomplish it; and Prelates have

no objections to inflaming their passions to promote it. Where is the security that the same principle will not be soon applied to more extended matters ?

4. *The want of union among Protestants, in opposition to Popery, cannot but advance its interests.*

The division of the Christian church into different branches, seems to be best calculated, in the present state of Christianity, to exhibit and increase the Redeemer's mediatorial glory. The design of Revelation is more to secure unanimity of faith and love, than sameness in opinion. The bond of union, as announced by Jesus Christ, consists in holy affections, and is fully capable of answering all the designs contemplated. To attempt unity on any other foundation, is to pursue a plan for which we have no sanction. The only value of intellectual agreement, is sympathy, but if that sympathy can be secured by devout affections, as the New Testament warrants us to believe, we are under no absolute necessity to resort to mental uniformity.

Distinct as the prominent Christian denominations are from each other in certain minor peculiarities, they generally harmonize on all essential points ; and consequently, there is no formidable barrier to prevent them from combining against errors, inconsistent with the cardinal principles held by all evangelical

believers. It is only when unimportant sentiments are magnified—when peculiarities lead to bigotry—that this combination is rendered difficult. Such sectarianism is not the unavoidable effect of intellectual diversity : it springs from other causes, having its seat in the heart, and deriving its sustenance from a morbid imagination.

The devotion of our respective denominations to their principles and organizations, has unhappily interfered with objects of universal Christian interest. It has blinded the religious mind of the country too much, and restrained that zeal which otherwise would have been consecrated to more extensive enterprises. So intent have we been on our own individual success, that the enemies of spiritual religion have taken advantage of the apathy, and used all means and measures to gain firm root in our soil. The same cause checked the progress of the Reformation. Theological opinions divided the great Protestant community. The virtue of the sacrament formed a subject of dispute, and free grace awakened dissensions. Creeds became symbols of parties. Sects arose. Jealousies were enkindled. The Papacy ceased to be the object of common attack, and it was Protestant *versus* Protestant. One army was separated into several armies, and brother opposed brother. Had the warfare been continued on the prin-

ciples that commenced it, we cannot but think that the results of the conflict would have been much more adverse to the Papacy. We are now suffering in this very way. The example of the Reformation points out the bad effects of such policy, but its lesson is not properly respected. Let facts speak for themselves. New-York has an organization to oppose Popery. Philadelphia lately formed an *American Protestant Association*, and published a most valuable address on the subject. Baltimore had a similar society, but we believe it has died away. We have no strong and general union—no consolidation of talent—no resources of wealth—to expose the evils of Popery. Individual ministers are exerting their influence against the system, but individual energy is hardly competent, in its isolated character, to effect such a vast object. If this condition of things continue, we must not be astonished at the future spread of Anti-christ.

5. *The marked unwillingness of the American Press to expose the pernicious tendencies of Popery.*

We allude to the newspaper press of our country. With some few praiseworthy exceptions, it is silent on this all-important subject. It will rarely admit articles designed to show the true merits of the case. It fears prejudice, and dreads the loss of patronage.

Our newspaper press is a means of wonderful power. It is ever in contact with popular mind, forming the opinions and determining the conduct of immense numbers. A large part of our population, prevented by daily business from extensive investigation and close study, derive their sentiments from its pages. We have here one paper for every 10,000 ; while in Europe, there is but one for every 106,000. The two States of New-York and Massachusetts, with a population of 3,000,000, have more newspapers than Great Britain, with a population of 25,000,000. If this mighty engine of usefulness were properly directed, it might confer the highest benefit on the religious interests of the country ; the tendencies of Popery would be revealed to all ; and our citizens would be guarded against its insidious approaches. The secular and political aspects of the system might be most properly discussed, statedly and earnestly, by it. Viewed in connexion with government and society, it is unquestionably a fit subject for most accurate and patient examination ; and if the newspaper press continue to fail in the discharge of its duty in this particular, it must be regarded as falling far short of its imperative obligations to the country. We do not ask its discussion of the religious merits of Popery—but we do ask its presentation of the political doctrines that constitute a

vital portion of it. We have a right to expect this from it. Circumstances have made it one of the defenders of our liberty, and as such, we are entitled to its support.

6. *The policy of Romanists will enlarge its influence.*

The advocates of the Papacy have recently shown their usual tact in identifying themselves with certain popular movements. So long as the temperance enterprise was struggling for existence, and met by determined opposition, we beheld them withholding their influence from it; but lately, they have displayed uncommon zeal in its promotion. We have no objections to such efforts. If St. Paul could rejoice even when the Gospel was preached from false motives, so we can rejoice, if a good cause is advanced by the exercise of principles that are not abstractly commendable. One fact is certain—Romanists have carried their religion into the temperance movement. The pledge has been received before the altar and at the hands of Priests; the solemnities of the church have been employed to identify it with their superstitions. A movement of a social character—a movement on general principles—cannot, with any shadow of justification, be associated with sectarian forms and bigoted exclusiveness. The success of the enterprise did not demand it. The honor of religion did not require it.

Commenced and extended by other means, it could have been supported and consummated without such selfish and objectionable resorts. Similar remarks might be made respecting their charities and hospitals. Every such instrumentality is connected with the church, and used to strengthen its institutions. Above all things, we fervently desire the abiding presence and anointing influence of Christianity in such great and good undertakings, but that is widely different from sectarianism.

*7. Whatever causes tend to decrease spiritual Christianity in the Protestant churches, will also tend to increase Popery.*

The history of Christianity in the United States, is a history of exceeding interest. Separated from the old world, it was introduced into these uncultivated wilds, that it might be freed from superstition and delivered from hierarchical opposition. It came hither to redeem its ancient name, and recover its ancient glory. It was not an age of missions, and yet the missionary spirit was intimately associated with its early diffusion by our forefathers. It was not an age of advanced knowledge, and yet the great truths of religion were perfectly comprehended. Providence has signalized the history of Christianity among us. Amid the perils of the Revolution—amid later struggles—amid fluctuations in trade—amid the unsettledness of our

population—we have been singularly preserved in the faith of the Gospel. A reviving influence has gone abroad frequently from the Holy Ghost. Witness the great work in the days of Whitfield and Edwards—the extensive revival in 1800—and the gracious seasons experienced from 1828 to 1841.

It cannot be disguised, however, that our national Christianity has serious obstacles to overcome. False doctrines abound. Formalism threatens us. Enthusiastical and fanatical sects are continually springing up, and entrapping the unwary. Education is too often divorced from religion. Our public men have too little fear of God before them, and our Sabbaths are shamefully violated. The chastening hand of Heaven falls heavily on us again and again, but we continue unmindful of the Divine sovereignty.

The popularity of religion in our country, exposes the churches to enervating influences. The line between the children of God and the children of the world, is not sufficiently marked; and the spirit of fashionable folly is too frequently seen in the professed disciples of Jesus Christ.

We regard these as growing evils. They are becoming worse and worse. The unavoidable effect will be, the degeneracy of the churches, and the diffusion of a meagre and superficial Christianity. Such a Christianity

will never suit us. The rapid growth of the nation—the speculating spirit of the times—the ardent love of novelty—demand the presence and power of evangelical piety in its noblest and holiest forms. If true Christianity loses by these means, Popery will gain. Its constitution and provisions are adapted to a corrupt age. It can dispense with high degrees of spiritual attainment. A defective Protestant can readily be converted into a good Catholic. How did Romanism rise? It sprung from a worldly-minded, enfeebled, secularized Christianity.

Let us not overlook this fact. A community has in its midst a degenerate Christianity—the form of godliness, without the life—the shadow without the substance. It must have some kind of religion, it cannot cherish one of entire devotion to God, it hastens into the embrace of Popery. The transition is easy and rapid. Have we not seen it? Have we not mourned over it? Let the American churches then know, that if elevated religious experience is not realized we open the way for the triumph of Popery.

## CHAPTER X.

DUTY OF AMERICAN PROTESTANTS—MEANS OF  
RESISTING POPERY.

WE have a formidable foe among us: its authority curtailed and its reverence almost destroyed in the other hemisphere, it now seeks to establish its lordly sway over our happy country. A channel has been opened through which the power of European Popery may operate on us. Foreign wealth aids it. Foreign favor smiles on its spread over our territories. The energy of youth is again circulating in its system, and the confidence of success is betrayed in all its movements. Is this the apostate church that, in the days of Napoleon, seemed to be finishing its career of crime? Is this the faith that, not long since, was ridiculed by its former friends, and compelled to resign its favorite measures? Is this the remnant of the Dark Ages, deprived of its finest possessions, and summoned before the bar of the world to answer for its unnumbered outrages? Is this the church, of which La Mennais spoke, as having the dust of the tomb on its silent lips? Wondrous transformation! The attenuated hand is covered with flesh; the ashes of the sepulchre have fled; the mute voice again thunders. The power and glory of Napoleon are gone:

the power and glory of Papacy begin to return.

Under such circumstances, we should endeavor to understand and discharge our duty.

The first thing to be impressed on our minds is, *that next to the direct spread of Christianity itself, we have no duty more solemn and imperative, than to oppose Popery.* Our fears are not great regarding Infidelity. It has no vitality—no attraction—no absorbing interest now. Its claims have hitherto arisen from its accidental connexion with philanthropy and republicanism; but such claims it dare not arrogate to itself among our enlightened population. Delivered from this danger, we could wish that we were threatened from no other quarter. Facts, however painful, must have weight with us. Popery is undermining our foundations, and we are earnestly called to resist its march. It cannot sympathize with our institutions, nor tolerate our Christianity. Every sentiment of patriotism, and every principle of true religion, urge us to oppose its progress. It is no party struggle—it is no conflict of sects—it is no war of opinions. It is the perpetuity of pure and undefiled doctrine—it is the existence of our altars and liberties, that imparts dignity and sacredness to the struggle.

The next point to be urged is, *that we must*

*not exhibit the spirit we condemn in Romanists.* We are not to adopt oppressive measures. The violence of persecution is to be carefully and conscientiously avoided. Our weapons are not to be carnal. If we *contend for the faith delivered to the Saints*, let us do it in the temper of the Saints. Light and Love are sufficient. What wonders has Heaven wrought with them! The throne of the Cæsars trembled under their influence—the strong-holds of Idolatry have been overthrown by it! We need no other power. Omnipotence works through these means, and Omnipotence will be with us, if we will make good use of them. Popery has tacitly acknowledged their potency. It cannot conceal its alarm at the spread of Bibles and Bible Societies. If the sword of man were drawn, it might defy it, but the sword of the Spirit arouses its apprehensions and crushes its expectations.

Waiving any further preliminary remarks, let us proceed to notice the means suitable to be employed in thwarting the exertions of Papists.

1. *We need an effective organization of Protestant energy.*

The principle of voluntary association for good objects, may justly be contemplated as one of the most valuable principles of modern effort. It affords an excellent exemplification

of that unity and co-operation of which kindred feelings make us capable. We require this external combination in resistance to Popery. It is an organization ; it is a body. Nothing human can surpass its admirable proportions, harmonious relations, and effective workings. Its life operates in every part ; its peculiar spirit animates all its branches. As the smallest bough of a tree is supplied by sap from the root, so is the humblest functionary in this society possessed of the vital energy. If we have to combat such an organization, we must organize our moral and intellectual forces, or we meet it on disadvantageous ground. Individual effort will accomplish nothing considerable. A man is much more of a man in association with his fellow, than when isolated. Union will give us confidence. It will encourage and strengthen. It will place our resources under competent management, and direct them in the best possible manner. We want such an organization at this moment. It would be a demonstration of sentiment and zeal that would operate powerfully. So long as we remain without it, we shall accomplish nothing important in the work.

2. *We are not to act merely on the defensive in this warfare.*

The nature and design of the Christian church plainly indicate that it was designed

to be aggressive in its movements. The idea of missionary agency, so prominent in its constitution, and so essential to the accomplishment of its destiny, confirms this view of its office. It is to make war on sin, and to recover the lost empire of the world to the sway and sovereignty of God. Have we not here a great principle? Is it not the principle that we are to move against all forms of opposition to holiness and all inconsistencies with the glory of Heaven? If so, we have our duty, in regard to Popery, detailed therein. Let us not wait till it reveals its enormities in our midst; let us not be idle spectators till time has given it courage, and success has changed its modesty into boldness. There stands the man of sin; there towers the mystery of iniquity; the reprobation of Earth and Heaven is on it; the stern voice of Justice is demanding the blood of martyred millions at its hands; one continent calls to the other continent to avenge its deeds of violence; and are we to be indifferent? Are we to repose upon our shields, and dream beneath our consecrated banner? No, no. Great interests are hazarded. Great victories are to be won, or great defeats suffered. One Apostle originally betrayed his Lord; one Church now endangers all his glory among men. One serpent led our first parents from the tree of life to the tree of evil; let us defend the second Eden and guard it from profanation.

3. *The enormities of Popery should be fearlessly exposed.*

Delicacy would indeed sometimes shrink from enumerating the more shocking vices that have been encouraged by this system. Its violation of social principles would prepare us *a priori* to expect such outrages on decent morality, as have occurred under its protection, and we are consequently prepared to believe the records of history respecting them. Prudence would forbid an indiscriminate use of these shameful facts, but nevertheless, we are not to shun their disclosure in a proper manner. The actual fruits of the system present the most tangible arguments for popular influence. Abstractions are not suitable for general use. Discussions of theories are not profitable to the mass of the people. Common sense men reason on common sense data. Here, we have every thing on our side. Here, we can make converted Romanists testify against the corruptions of Popery. Here, we can bring all history to our aid. The usual course of this controversy has not given that prominence to these startling circumstances, that the exigencies of the case demanded. Could we fairly and fully develope the system, without even hinting at them, we should rejoice in it, but that cannot be done. The whole truth should be brought to light. Violent diseases require violent treatment.

4. *Special attention should be paid to the rising generation, and the course of Papists towards it be narrowly watched.*

We have witnessed the anxiety of Popery to have the Holy Scriptures banished from common schools, and we have seen its increasing concern to bring the youth of our land under its fascinations. Can we misinterpret these intimations? The light of the past—the light of the present—shines on them. Whatever mystery envelops the course of Romanists, we have a clew to interpret it. Whatever turn they take, we have a sure guide to follow them. The secrets of their cloisters are now revealed, and no tact can deceive us. Let us especially guard the young against their snares. The curiosity of the youthful—their sensitiveness to kindness and proneness to judge by outward manifestations merely—fit them to be the dupes of this witchery. We must preserve them from these snares. Our unwearied effort should be to connect religious principles more and more closely with daily education, and thus to fortify the rising generation against the delusions of Popery.

5. *The power of the Pulpit and the Press should be fervently and prayerfully directed against it.*

Superstition attaches false ideas to the ministry. Enthusiasm clothes it with supernatu-

ral abilities. Enlightened religion is free from both errors. It exalts the ministry, but not above its rightful position, contemplating it as a most wise and sacred institution, and yielding due respect to it, for the sake of its Divine Founder. It has, indeed, great power. The wonders of the Apostolic age—the wonders of the Reformation—are nearly allied to it. If it is set for the defence of the Gospel, how can it be silent on this momentous subject? A delusion, commencing in the imagination, and extending to the entire mind of its subject, blinding the whole inner nature to the suggestions of consciousness and the appeals of Providence; how can the servant of God fulfil his duty and pass it by as a thing of indifference? If the Apostles exposed it in Prophecy, shall it fail to trace the realization? Such conduct is censurable. No pulpit should neglect its exposure.

Providence has granted the Pulpit a most valuable coadjutor in the Press. It is the pulpit in another form—it is the ministry with thousands of voices—it is the ministry in direct communion with all homes and hearths—it is the ministry expanded, magnified. The employment of this wonderful power, is one of the distinguishing marks of modern Christian responsibility, and we may say, that it has almost inconceivably increased our obligations to truth. It is a new element in duty. It is a new life in the church.

If we look at its connexion with mission operations—if we study its influence in the hands of Bible and Tract Societies—we are amazed at the benefits it is capable of communicating to the world.

Such an instrumentality should not—must not—be lost to Protestantism, in its efforts to destroy Popery. It is just what we want. It can reach all and enlighten all. Its issues can bear bad treatment from unfriendly minds. If they are insulted, they will not be aggrieved. If they are burned, others can take their places. The call of duty, then, is to lay great stress on this means of influence. It did much for the Reformation ; it may do much more now.

Unite these two potent agencies—let both be consecrated by ever-fervent and ever-rising prayer—and the evil can be arrested. The benediction of Almighty God is pledged to them. The zeal of the whole Christian Church can operate through them, until the final achievement is made.

6. *It is highly important to place this controversy on its proper grounds.*

The conflicts between sects are not likely to excite general interest, and struggles among parties for ascendancy are usually attended with no small share of odium. No surer plan could be adopted to defeat the efforts of Protestants, than to pursue the con-

troversy on party and sectarian principles. Suppose that we engage in this enterprise as Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Baptists, and Methodists—suppose that we hold up our respective creeds, and try Popery by its inconsistency with them. We lay ourselves at once open to selfish considerations; we are liable to the imputation of bad motives; we take ground from which our brethren must be partly excluded. Assume the other, and nobler position: array talent and tact against it on general sentiments; assail it as Christians, as Moralists, as Philanthropists, as Patriots; adopt “*Israel*,” not “*Judah*” or “*Benjamin*,” as the watchword; and we take the true attitude. Instead of a contracted field, we have then a broad and ample territory before us; instead of a family “*coat of arms*,” we have the imposing symbols of the cross and the sceptre of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The human mind, be it remembered, is never so likely to be preserved from fanatical feelings, as when its sentiments and affections are controlled by general principles. Let us be careful on this point, and adopt all our measures on the sure and extended foundation of common morality, common safety, and common Christianity. Nothing else befits such a struggle.

7. *Above all, should we feel that, in the activity and piety of the Protestant portion*

*of America, is found the only hope, so far as human agency is concerned, of arresting this great evil.*

Popery itself knows no inherent power of reformation. If it be studied as a political scheme, it deprives the people of all check upon its rulers, and fastens the chains of despotism upon them. They have no Magna Charta—no Bill of Rights—no reserved privileges. All identity is lost in the Pope. If it be reviewed as a religious system, the same feature stands out prominently before us. It extinguishes reason; it claims to represent the Great God; and thus destroys every sentiment that might lead to resistance. Every thing in this wonderful polity bears the mark of a design to cut off all possibility, as far as can be, of a redeeming spirit issuing forth from itself. A man may become degraded by social depravity, and society may be ready to eject him from its bosom; but should his sense of public opinion and moral judgment remain, there is hope for him. Arguments may arouse his dormant pride; tears may soften him; conscience may echo the stern tones of Sinai; and, the foundation still standing, weakened though it be, the goodly superstructure of virtue may again be erected. Popery has no moral sense, no discerning conscience, left in its subjects. It thinks, believes, and acts for them. It embodies their life in its life. Can

any man show how such a system can give birth to a regenerating energy ?

The history of the Reformation cannot be regarded as an exception to the foregoing remarks. It was not originated on Papistical principles, nor conducted on Papistical policy. Its commencement and consummation were utterly and thoroughly at variance with the Church. Peculiar circumstances marked all its events. The interposition of Providence was unusually displayed, and resources were developed that can be hardly expected again.

The established constitution of the Papacy affording no hope of its improvement, we are compelled to look to Protestantism for that power which will save the world from its destructive agency. The true light in which to contemplate Protestantism, is not as the mere opposite of Popery. It is not a negative against a positive. Such an idea falls far short of its real character. Not only does it present an antagonistic attitude against the dogmas and devotion of Rome, but it advances farther, occupying a field peculiar to itself, and communing with objects that dwell only in its sacred confines. It sympathizes with whatever is venerable and august in the Universe. It shines with the radiance of heavenly Christianity. It reveals glories, with which Popery has no connexion. It has a sphere,

where it is solitary and alone—where no rival can enter—where its fellowship is unmarred and undisturbed.

The welfare of society and the honor of Christianity, are committed, as a divine deposit, to its guardianship. Precious memories and sublime hopes cluster around it. The great elements of purity and power are in its doctrines and precepts; and on us, as its supporters, devolves the duty of executing its sacred trust.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### CONCLUSION.

THE present condition of Popery in our country warrants the belief that, as yet, it is perfectly manageable by Protestants. If its power be augmented among us, it must be chiefly owing to our indolence. We have almost innumerable incitements to urge us to this work.

A general opinion prevails in the Christian world, that Popery will experience a resuscitation of its energies, and again enslave the human mind. Learned and judicious commentators have held it. Prophecy seems to

authorize such a conviction. All the signs of the times strengthen it.

If this is the fact, it becomes an important and interesting inquiry, whether our country will probably be the scene of its triumph. To discuss that point now, would lead us too far from our immediate task. Our duty is independent of such considerations. The revelations of prophecy do not belong to the preceptive portion of religion, and are not designed to be a ground of action. The line of duty is drawn much more clearly than the finger of prophecy is accustomed to mark.

Whatever may be the final issue, we have high and animating hopes to encourage us to resist the wiles of Popery. The truth of revelation is precious in the sight of God ; it is a part of himself ; it is his greatest glory ; and if used properly, must have his benediction. The interests of pure Christianity are blending with all our national hopes, and we begin to see that its emblematic dove must be honored more than our armorial eagle, if the heritage of our Fathers be maintained.

Our position is very different from the attitude in which the noble heroes of the Reformation were placed. Every form of difficulty embarrassed them. Every kind of terror was arrayed against them. The magnitude of Papal power was almost beyond estimation. It had never failed to crush its opponents.

The movements of the Albigensians had been defeated—the lips of Huss and Jerome had been sealed—and the Lollards had been prostrated beneath its gigantic strength. The world was its home. It had its altars among the vine-hills of France, and the barren heaths of Scotland. Its temples stood where the Druid had piled his rude stones, and the Saxon had worshipped Woden. Its splendid ceremonies had charmed the senses of Northern clans, and captivated the imagination of Southern Europe. It had crowned Pepin—honored Charlemagne—and immortalized Martel. It had decided on Astronomy, and maintained the sole umpire in law and politics. It was sovereign at the fireside and every mart of trade. It was a hero in every romance and a warrior in every battle. It held the keys of Heaven and Hell. It was above God. And could Luther and his brave associates shake it? Armed with divine power, they made it tremble. The robe of scarlet was rent; the mask was torn from the face of the impostor. Faith triumphed over Dogmas. Knowledge vanquished Superstition. We are much more favorably situated than they were. The light of modern ages assists us—the improved state of the world aids us. The advancements of Biblical science contribute to our intellectual and moral strength. If we slumber over our obligations, where will be

our excuse? If so much could be effected then, what may not be effected now?

We are not alarmists. We are not the advocates of strife. We are for peace, where peace does not compromise principle. The danger to our civil and religious freedom, from the designs and doings of Romanism, is real. No man who properly consults the facts in the case, can avoid apprehension. Is it to be disguised, that the Austrian Government is exerting itself to plant Popery in our land, and make it predominate over all other forms of religion? Have the arguments on this point, so manfully and powerfully urged in a series of papers in the New-York Observer, been refuted? Have the movements of Prince Metternich been successfully denied? Have we not had a new plan for Catholic emigration from the hands of a London Banker, which, if executed, will overrun our western territory with the slaves of this obnoxious and ruinous creed? Have not the Americans been driven, in some of our principal cities, to distinct political organizations to oppose the high-handed measures of Papistical adherents? Is there no omen in the threats of Romanists—in their conduct on the school question—in their boasts that they have already the balance of power? Is there nothing in all this? Men may talk of the change in the spirit and policy of Rome. Where is the

evidence of it? Where are the acknowledgments of past error, and the pledges for better actions in the future? Where are the official announcements of charity and forbearance towards heretics? Every Bishop in the United States is appointed by the Pope, and sworn to support him. Every priest is under the control of the Bishops, and bound to be his agent. Differences and disturbances among them and their dependent laity, are adjusted at Rome; and yet, we are told, that the Popery of our country is not under the management of a Foreign Power! The obligations of every Romanist to the Pope are infinitely paramount, according to the creed of the Church, to all civil law and national relation; and yet, we are gravely informed, that there is no cause of alarm! One century before the ascendancy of the Roman See over Europe, was there any thing like the evidence of such a design as we now have in connexion with our own country? Have we forgotten that the policy of this corrupt Church is secrecy—that it looks far into the future—that it matures its plans slowly? If the devotees of this unholy faith have so rapidly increased within a few years as to number Two Millions, how long will it take them to rival and exceed the American Protestants? The greatest evils of life—the most deplorable calamities in the history of governments,—are

usually the least expected. Our fortunes are often on the verge of ruin, before we have suspected it. The slow approach of disease may be guarded against; the stroke of the thunderbolt hurries us into the quick embrace of death.

A faithful examination of the Romish system, has led us to the conclusion, that it is so constituted as to be a carnal substitute for true Christianity. It makes a show of venerableness, and gathers the impressive and awful around it; appeals to the sublime and eternal; professes extreme sanctity, and presents the symbols of faith with apparent solemnity. All this, however, is merely external. The form dazzles; the spirit deludes. It speaks the language of Heaven, but the import thereof is entirely perverted. It elevates the Cross, but it is the Cross of the corrupt Church, and not the Cross of the blessed Gospel. It holds the censer, but the ancient incense burns not upon it. "*Money answers all things*:" for it, the most shocking iniquities may be committed; for it, you may ravage society and offer the most revolting indignities to the Majesty of the Throne. A priest may not marry; but according to the law made and provided in such cases, he may keep a concubine for 12s. 6d. A layman may murder a layman, for about 7s. 6d. Such were the ecclesiastical arrangements of past times; such the ordinations of the Infallible!

The popular mind is easily satisfied on religious subjects. It seldom investigates such things earnestly and deeply. Popery wears a fascinating exterior, and ensnares its feeble judgment and feeble faith. It promises bread, but gives a stone. It promises an egg, but gives a scorpion. Assimilated to Deism, in its avowed denial of the supreme authority of the one Revelation--assimilated to Mohammedanism in its resort to physical means to perpetuate and extend its dogmas--assimilated to Heathenism in its idolatry and gorgeousness—it utterly overthrows whatever is high and holy in the religion of the humble Nazarene. It annuls the power of our strongest instincts. Its own corrupt and morbid imagination is the sovereign of the Universe; it is above all and beyond all; it leaves nothing for any rival to accomplish. Where it has sway, conscience is no witness against it, and natural refinement no obstacle to its advancement. The great idea of humanity, and the infinitely greater idea of Christianity, are alike metamorphosed by its wonderful influence.

Such is the religious system, so artfully urged upon the reverence and love of our countrymen. We are asked to renounce Protestantism to embrace it. We are promised in it the original faith, the safe guide, the unfailing consolation of afflicted and erring mortality. *The blood of sixty-eight millions*

*of our race*, sacrificed by its unrelenting cruelty, crimsoned its altars ; and yet, we are implored to render it the admiration of reason, and the homage of praise ! The worst men of the world have been canonized by it : and we are implored to sympathize with its morality ! If they must have converts, let Romanists seek them among kindred spirits ; let them labor among the unenlightened and uncivilized, where history unfolds not the past, and prophecy casts no radiance over the future ; let them retreat from a land, consecrated by the presence of a wiser and better religion. They have surely forgotten our illustrious ancestry. They have overlooked our noble birth, and our noble birthright. If they have disregarded common sense and common modesty, let them not imagine that the men of this generation have descended to a similar degradation.

Exalted above the nations of the earth in civil privileges, and favored with all physical advantages, we are bound to improve these national talents to the spiritual advancement of Christianity. Our country has been honored for this special purpose. The highest value of our liberty is found in the opportunity it gives us to extend the Redeemer's Kingdom, and hasten the Millennial glory. Arrayed against all political and religious interests—arrayed against the peace of our

homes and the prosperity of our business—is this amazing scheme of Popery ; condensing in itself the worst elements of superstition, and concealing its real designs under the pretexts of mercy and benevolence. One course alone is left to us. It is entire and unwearied opposition to this ruinous system. One weapon only is in our hands. It is the truth of Heaven. One thing only can ensure our success. It is the blessing of God, in answer to faithful prayer. Any thing short of this, if made our trust, is enthusiasm ; any thing beyond it, is supererogation.

THE END.

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